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D. H. LAWRENCE'S STUDY OF THOMAS HARDY

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By

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ABSTRACT

In pursuing his unique style of literary criticism, Lawrence sets himself the literary task to "save the tale from the artist who created it ". In his provocative Study of Thomas Hardy, Lawrence occasionally moves beyond simple interpretation to a virtual rewriting of Hardy's novels. With his exclusively personal and interior focus, Lawrence's critical method involves the retelling of Hardy's narratives as though he had written them, isolating only what interests him. The Study's critical judgements are stamped always with Lawrence's own dynamic and dramatic personality. Yet the energetic application of his firmly-held convictions to Hardy's novels yields illuminating insights into certain fundamental aspects of Hardy's work that can be matched perhaps nowhere else in criticism.

This study provides a critical examination and assessment of Lawrence's critical method, particularly as he applied ^{it} to Hardy's Return of the Native, Tess and Jude. Some attempt is made to indicate what other predominant critical interpretations applied to the Hardy canon involve, and to provide some context from which to assess Lawrence's critical contribution. The epilogue

briefly comments on what purpose the Study served in clarifying Lawrence's thoughts on his own writing as a novelist.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

For the sake of simplicity, references to the major primary texts have been incorporated in parentheses in the body of the thesis. Titles are abbreviated in the following fashion:

- Thomas Hardy. Jude the Obscure.
London: MacMillan, New Wessex Edition, 1978. J
- Thomas Hardy. The Return of the Native.
N.Y.: Signet, 1959. RN
- Thomas Hardy. Tess of the d'Urbervilles.
London: MacMillan, New Wessex Edition, 1977. T
- D.H. Lawrence. Study of Thomas Hardy, Phoenix.
Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978. S

INTRODUCTION

That the reading of Hardy is a problem, we have the word of a great many critics, and if it were not, they would not have written so many books explaining him to us. The production of Hardy scholarship and Hardy criticism continues at a rate that makes the reading of it more than a full-time job. Even the most stout-hearted of appreciators might well be daunted by the vast and sundry assortment of critical books, articles and essays. Any individual attempting to wade through this critical morass soon confronts the enormous difficulty of actually coming to terms with the work itself, unimpeded by any of the surrounding critical apparatus. The problem with any such elaborate critical machine is that the reader can begin to feel that the art can only communicate with the critics' help — filtered through his eyes, elaborated by his values. This rapidly leads to further complications. A problem of language often arises, in that a writer may suggest more than he says, but this by extension does not mean that what he says can mean anything anyone else likes.

Hardy critics seem particularly prone to that myopic affliction which affects so much literary criticism — the inability to read the actual words before us, in our impatience and conviction that we already know what Hardy

is going to say. Hardy criticism, as a whole, frequently suffers, in that contexts are not checked consistently. Critics borrow from each other, seizing on the same quotations - often provisional or half-statements or minor concessions. These are then misinterpreted, quoted as if they were deliberately formulated dogmas. A prime example can be taken from those critics who wish to emphasize the fact that Hardy is not interested in human potentialities. Referring to Hardy's stated "wish to set the emotional history of two infinitesimal lives against the background of the stellar universe", they suppress the rest of the sentence and thus the point Hardy makes - "and to impart to readers the sentiment that of these great contrasting magnitudes the smaller might be the greater to them as men."¹

With the novel form particularly, the critic has almost limitless scope for selective misrepresentation. But with Hardy novels, the opportunities are not only numerous, but of a special kind, since he narrates by means of continual contrasts. Hence, it becomes very easy for the careless or the prejudiced to select one side of the contrast and present Hardy in a false light. Hardy frequently juxtaposes the seemingly hopeless situation and the appearance of a chance, even that not always taken. Tess lives in virtual enslavement at Flintcomb Ash, bearing up under almost insurmountable pressures, yet her nerve fails

when she goes to make a desperate final appeal for help to Angel's parents. Hardy will follow a suicidal impulse with a calm, sensible resolve for action. Jude is utterly disillusioned when he realizes Arabella's true nature, yet subsequently rallies from despair to push again for his Christminster dreams, in somewhat altered form. Near despair can somehow summon renewed vigor. Clym lives in solitary loneliness, bereft of wife, mother and Thomasin when she remarries. Still he turns to an outward rechanneling of his remaining force and vitality as he becomes an itinerant preacher to the Egdon "eremites."

Having once recognized the difficulties of sheer volume and the problems the special nature of Hardy's writings pose to critics, one then faces at least three major schools of thought on Hardy's work: the sociological-economic, the philosophical and the Lawrencean schools. This thesis proposes to do no more than provide a somewhat limited assessment of Lawrence's critical approach, focussing specifically on his analyses of The Return of the Native, Tess of the d'Urbervilles and Jude the Obscure in the Study of Thomas Hardy. It seems useful, however, at this time to indicate what the other predominant critical interpretations applied to the Hardy canon involve, and to provide some context from which to assess Lawrence's critical contribution.

The sociological-economic interpretation of the Wessex novels long held great sway in the critical struggle to establish the definitive reading of Hardy's novels. Critics writing from this vantage point stress, and rightly so, the paramount importance of relating Hardy's novels to the historical realities of nineteenth-century rural England. Douglas Brown, in Thomas Hardy (1954), provides an apt summary of the basic themes these critics see operative in the Wessex novels. Brown strongly argues that Hardy's personal dismay at the predicament of the agricultural community in the south of England at the end of the century motivated the writing of his novels. Positing a theme of "urban invasion", Brown reads the novels as the record of "a clash between agricultural and urban modes of life".² Brown sees the novels progressing and unfolding by way of the antithesis generated by the confrontation of strong-natured countrymen, disciplined by the necessities of agricultural life (Oak, Clym, Mrs. Yeobright, Tess) and those men and women of the "outside" world - better educated, superior in social status, yet inferior in moral worth (Troy, Wildeve, Alec, Angel). Having determined this single overriding concern, Brown baldly states his thesis; "Not only Tess and Jude, but each of the great Wessex novels treats in imaginative form of the defeat of our peasantry and the collapse of our agriculture."³

This vision of Hardy as a novelist of a vanishing way of life, indulging in a nostalgic yearning for old-fashioned rural simplicity and a deep hostility towards the disruptive forces of urbanism, industrialism and education, has undergone some revision. This critical approach, and Brown in particular, comes under fire for romanticizing old rural England. The perspective has been slammed for distorting the novels by its sad bemoaning of changes in the time-honoured stable rural life, the decay of old customs and local traditions. John Holloway, in The Charted Mirror (1950), questions these assumptions:

They (the novels) suggest not just a growing preoccupation with the rural problem, nor even a growing sense that an earlier way of life was inevitably vanishing. They suggest something more disquieting: a gathering realisation that the earlier way did not possess the inner resources upon which to make a good fight for its existence. The old order was not just a less powerful mode of life than the new, but ultimately helpless before it through inner defect.⁴

In actual fact, the preservation of intact rural communities and "traditional sanctities" seems to have inspired some of Hardy's critics more than Hardy himself. Hardy wrote in his essay, "The Dorsetshire Labourer" (1883):

They are losing their individuality, but they are widening the range of their ideas, and gaining in freedom. It is too much to expect them to remain stagnant and old-fashioned for the pleasure of romantic spectators.⁵

Evidence culled from the Wessex novels strongly suggests

that Hardy was far more concerned with the difficulties of overcoming prejudice, convention, inhibitions and other barriers between individuals and groups that cause unnecessary suffering than with mourning the passage of the old agricultural way of life, rooted in nature.

Merryn Williams, in Thomas Hardy and Rural England (1972), acknowledges the criticism of the "contemporary agricultural tragedy"⁶ thesis, yet still maintains the basic critical premise that it is necessary to study Hardy in relation to his society. Williams ostensibly points out the fundamental error of confusing Hardy's intentions with the state of things in nineteenth-century rural England, and then proceeds to redress this critical flaw by detailing in lengthy fashion the actual state of affairs. He sketches a picture of southern England from 1840 to 1900, emphasizing the ways in which the structure of society changed as the numbers employed in agriculture rapidly declined with the growth of industry, better wages, more accessible education, and increased mobility through rail transportation. Williams carefully documents the increasing dissatisfaction with the old rural ways of life. Yet for all his admirable historical research, Williams reads the Wessex novels from a Marxist perspective, merely shifting the existing terminology. Brown's lamented "lost peasantry" simply become in Williams' analysis "small capitalist farmers" or "rural proletariats", struggling to survive the

onslaught of "rising urban capitalists" and the "arriviste⁷ bourgeois" element.

Despite these differences, the net result of both Brown's and Williams' readings of the Hardy novels is essentially the same. Both cast Clym as the undisputed hero of The Return of the Native - the novel's key figure depicted as a direct representation of the rejection of urban life and the "glittering splendours" of Paris.⁸ Eustacia appears, in Brown's eyes, an "unconvincing character", belonging to a "madrival". For Williams, she is merely an aspiring fortune-hunter with superficial notions of refinement, wanting any serious purpose as she "fritters away her life in a series of empty passions and idle adventures...the expression of an inauthentic personality, without the strength to stand on its own."⁹ Both hand accolades to Clym, arguing the justness of his teaching aspirations and his vision of bringing intellectual enlightenment to overcome the "primitive barbarism of the heath"¹⁰ and the rampant ignorance and superstition of characters like Susan Nunsuch and Christian Cantle. As well, Brown and Williams find the novel's conclusion completely satisfying, with Clym preaching and teaching the "traditional morality of Egdon."¹¹ "Ultimately Clym is seen as the noblest character in the book and as a genuine popular preacher."¹²

Tess provides perhaps the greatest opportunities for critics seeking to impose a purely socio-historical perspective. Arnold Kettle, in his influential essay on Tess,¹³ ironically follows Lawrence's own critical dictum, "Never trust the artist, trust the tale", to arrive at conclusions which diametrically oppose those of Lawrence. Certainly not to be accused of hedging the issue or fence-sitting, Kettle makes plain his position in the first sentence of his analysis: "The subject of Tess of the d'Urbervilles is stated clearly by Hardy to be the fate of a 'pure woman' ; in fact it is the destruction of the English peasantry".¹⁴ Later he extends this to claim "what Hardy got hold of (in Tess) was not, I think, quite what his conscious mind believed."¹⁵ Kettle insists that we cannot read Tess, as Lawrence essentially did, as a "psychological drama". With dogmatic tenacity Kettle argues the case that Tess is primarily a "social document":

It is important for a number of reasons to emphasize that Tess of the d'Urbervilles is a moral fable, that it is the expression of a generalized human situation in history and neither (what it is generally assumed to be) a purely personal tragedy nor (what Hardy appears to have intended) a philosophic comment on life in general and the fate of woman in particular. 16

Kettle premises his analysis on a number of tenuous assumptions, relying on the force of his rhetoric and passionate commitment to this interpretation to carry the reader past any methodological difficulties. Kettle, like

Lawrence, derides any "philosophic" interpretation of the novel. Yet Kettle goes further to assume blankly that Hardy himself had intended the novel to be a philosophic statement, without offering any real textual proof that this was, in fact, the total meaning or message Hardy wished to express.

Hardy took his philosophy of the Immanent Will very seriously and undoubtedly saw Tess as the victim of President of the Immortals. A pessimistic and deterministic view of the world in which man (and, even more, woman) is at the mercy of an unyielding outside fate is the conscious philosophy behind the novel. 17 (emphasis mine)

Kettle here seems to be falling into that "myopic affliction" which generally plagues Hardy critics. Almost mesmerized, he appears unable to read beyond, in any inclusive, synthesizing fashion, those references to the "blighted star" and "President of the Immortals." Although no one's conclusions concerning Tess would seem further apart than Kettle's and Lawrence's, they come together in denouncing Hardy's poor showing as a conscious metaphysician while paying tribute to the vital imaginative force of the novel. Kettle writes: "And yet Tess survives Hardy's philosophy. It survives because his imaginative understanding of the disintegration of the peasantry is more powerful than the limiting tendencies of his conscious outlook." 18

Kettle constantly refers to "the peasant Tess" in his analysis, implicitly subordinating the individual to the social classification. Brown does much the same

thing, terming Tess "the agricultural predicament in metaphor."¹⁹ In this reading, Tess, representative of the peasant class, is baffled and defeated by processes beyond her understanding or control. Alec, the masquerader, the urban economic intruder, represents the whole continuum of events destroying the bases of agrarian security; Angel, the intellectual and spiritual awareness that confuses traditional values and assumptions. Tess between them is destroyed ultimately by the forces they embody. Brown in particular lays great emphasis on Tess's enslavement to the threshing machine at Flintcomb Ash, symbolically viewing the machine as a "mechanical impersonal agent of destruction"²⁰ imported from the "outside" world to shatter traditional rhythms of agricultural life. Williams slightly alters this reading to accord with his Marxist perspective, finding the landscape of Flintcomb Ash significant for its depiction of exploited wage labour. The terrifying image of annihilation in the featureless terrain symbolizes, for him, work drained of all human meaning and field-hands reduced to the status of flies. Williams also gives Clare an extremely sympathetic reading, stressing what great pains Angel goes to to overcome the limitations of his background in an attempt to combine plain living and "high" thinking to the same positive purpose as a Clym Yeobright. For this effort to break out of his "bourgeois"

upbringing, Williams grants Angel some measure of absolution:
 "For Angel is an intellectual pioneer, like Clym - and -
 like Clym - is held back from fulfilling himself by
 anachronistic weakness and prejudice."²¹

The pure "agricultural tragedy" critics experience greater difficulty in applying their analyses wholesale to Jude the Obscure. Brown recognizes the significant shift in Jude from the early novels' emphasis on local stability and protagonists with roots deep in the community to Jude's dispossession and social ambitions which lead him to the civic world, a milieu of intellect, introspection and subtle self-consciousness. Yet on the whole, Brown damns Jude for its "failure of total imaginative organization,"²² viewing this novel of "place names, changes, journeys and homelessness"²³ as something of an aberration in the Hardy canon. Williams' more overtly Marxist perspective provides him with at least a way into the novel, but the emphasis is purely on the thwarting of Jude's economic and social aspirations, with particular care to note the validity and integrity of Jude's work as a stonemason. Jude, in Williams' analysis, is the alienated proletariat, cut off from any feeling of continuity with the past or close connections to family or locale. He is thrown into a frustrating social arena where all his efforts are blocked by Christminster class exclusiveness and bookish scholasticism.

Williams views this confrontation between a "false" society's inhibiting institutions and the striving proletariat's ambitions as the central theme of Jude, and hence sees this cruel, rigidly class-structured society as wholly responsible for the eventual destruction of Sue and the deaths of Jude and the children. Such an interpretive framework leads Williams to believe the suicide of Father Time functions in the novel strictly as a despairing response to the social and economic realities of numbers of unwanted children and their bleak future. This limited perception ignores any possible interpretations of this event as an instance of the blackness of Hardy's metaphysical speculations or as a horrific symbol of the psychological trauma that involves Jude and Sue, as well as Father Time.

The "philosophical" school of Hardy criticism often tends to produce new theories and idiosyncratic interpretations. Quoting ingeniously, these critics tend to seize on any "philosophic" intrusion to support their basic belief that the whole of Hardy's fiction dramatizes "the ill-judged execution of a well-judged plan of things."²⁴ Older critics especially attached their criticism to the biographical data of Hardy's life, styling Hardy variously as a pessimist, defeatist or fatalist, while making much of the influence of German philosophers like Schopenhauer and von Hartmann on Hardy. A.E. Elliot, in his Fatalism in the

Works of Thomas Hardy (1935), provides evidence of the worst excesses and methodological problems inherent in this school. Elliott constantly falls into the trap of circular argument, projecting what he sees as the bleak pessimism of the novels back onto Hardy's own life. He then cites Hardy's fatalistic nature as the cause of the novels' conception of an irrational world subject to both ungoverned chance and cruel determinism, a world in which pain must inevitably result from conflict. Elliott's argument proceeds largely through bald statement, with little or no supporting documentation. He locates the formation of what he sees as Hardy's general cast of mind, a certain melancholia and morbid sensitivity, in his childhood experiences: "This feeling of his childhood seems to have remained with him to the end. Never in his entire life did he look upon existence as being very much worth while. He was the victim of inherent gloom."²⁵ Elliott then trots out elaborate stories of Hardy's hypochondria, his marital difficulties, his struggles with atheism and agnosticism - all as proof of the biographical underpinnings of Hardy's fatalism. A fear of the mechanistic ideals inherent in the biological discoveries of Huxley and Darwin and an innate attraction for Schopenhauer's vision of the Immanent Will are also attributed to Hardy in Elliott's analysis.

There exists a danger, however, in scrambling for parallels and sources for Hardy's "philosophy" in other thinkers that Elliott and other offenders ignore. They tend to credit Hardy with a system of thought more elaborate and self-conscious than he ever intended it to be. Hardy himself denied any intention to create a consistent, coherent philosophy in his preface to Jude the Obscure:

Like former productions of this pen, Jude the Obscure is simply an endeavor to give shape and coherence to a series of seemings, or personal impressions. The question of their consistency or their discordance, of their permanence or their transitoriness, being regarded not of the first moment. (J,23)

Yet despite this disclaimer, proponents of the "philosophical" school submit Hardy's novels to their monolithic approach. Eustacia is applauded for refusing to accept the responsibility of turning away Mrs. Yeobright, and instead blaming some colossal "Prince of the World." (RN,361) Similarly, her despairing cry as she waits to elope with Wildeve, "How I have tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me!", (RN,421) is seen as a just and appropriate response to the fictional world Hardy creates. Elliott lays great emphasis on the persistent fatalism reflected in the characters in Tess. He particularly cites the passivity with which Joan Durbeyfield accepts Tess's pregnancy - (T,117) "Tis nater, after all, and what do please God!". Tess, in Elliott's reading, resigns herself hopelessly to her doom,

tragic in the knowledge of her own innocence. In Jude, Elliott sees all the tools at fate's disposal - heredity, coincidence, woman, convention - marshalled against the sensitive and vulnerable Jude, his hopes and ideals constantly uprooted until the terrible final scene when he wishes ²⁶ never to have been born. From this, Elliott extrapolates: "It is very clear that Jude is the victim of a determined state of things. His will is not free: character has no part of his destiny. Everything has been beyond his control." In promoting this misconceived view of Hardy's pessimism, Elliott credits Hardy with a belief in a malign force or being that frustrates all human efforts. This is an image Hardy worked very hard to dispel, resorting in frustration even to bitter sarcasm - "As I need hardly inform any thinking reader, I do not hold, and never have held, the ludicrous opinions...assumed to be mine."²⁷

Yet it is not simply older critics who argue the line that Hardy patiently and systematically set out to portray a world which in its laws or tendencies is indifferent or hostile to men. F.R. Southerington, in Hardy's Vision of Man (1971), relies extensively on a kind of pseudo-biographical criticism to support his readings of Hardy's novels.

The loss of Tryphena, the suicide of Moule, the birth of the child, the failure of a

marriage, the frustration of a vocation for the ministry, and subsequent loss of faith - who can gauge adequately the effect of these upon a sensitive and brooding spirit whose inspiration had been consistently derived from the past. 28

This kind of criticism involves an intellectual reneging, a refusal to cope with the text and its intricacies and ambiguities, retreating behind a vague wall of conjured psychic disturbances which infected Hardy's work. As well, the assumption that Hardy consistently derived his "inspiration" from his own past personal experiences presupposes a certain limited view of the creative process of writing, that in itself is subject to debate. Perhaps this is a case in point for the application of Hemingway's wry dictum - "Madame, it is a mistake to know the author too well."²⁹ Emotional turmoil and crises of faith may well have had some impact on Hardy's writing, both in substance and in tone, but any attempt to establish hard and fast connections between the events in the author's life and the fictional realm of the novel places the critic on somewhat shaky ground. Southerington particularly is culpable for the great stress he lays on the Tryphena Sparks love affair - an incident whose details are at best questionable and at worst largely fabricated by eager, over-zealous "scholars". Yet Southerington treats the whole affair as if it were unquestioned truth, and even goes as far as to produce what he believes to be Hardy's

bastard son. As well, the implication that Hardy's agnostic stance was all the more tortured for having resulted from a frustrated vocation for the ministry seems to stand somewhat at odds with Hardy's own comment in his Life, where he says, "I have been looking for God 50 years, and I think that if he had existed I should have discovered him."³⁰ Apart from all these difficulties with Southerington's theories, perhaps the most damning is the fact that it is not a particularly enlightening approach to Hardy's novels, nor does it open up the works in any meaningful sense.

Roy Morell, in Thomas Hardy The Will and the Way (1965), attempts to resuscitate the old "philosophical" school under his revisionist framework. Shifting the emphasis from Hardy's "pessimism" or "fatalism", Morell argues that Hardy's "philosophy" simply approximates a tough realism, that man is successful in the long run only if he is prepared for the worst contingencies and if his demands on life are modest. Morell relies heavily on a quotation he abstracts from Hardy's "In Tenebris" - "If way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst."³¹ As Morell points out, the older "philosophical" critics are so set on proving Hardy a pessimist that they ignore the fact that Hardy sees situations and people in terms of both chance and change, "flux and reflux." In talking only of hopeless situations and despair, they ignore the rallies and successes Hardy's characters do

experience, however briefly, after taking a "full look at the Worst." Here Morell makes much of Tess's Talbothays "rally" after Sorrow's birth and death and Jude's recovery and determination to tackle Christminster yet again after Arabella's desertion and his attempted suicide.

Morell's theory holds up best in his analysis of Tess. His reading of that much-discussed problematic phrase, "President of the Immortals," serves to illuminate his method of interpretation. Morell dismisses those critics who wish to accuse Hardy of inconsistency, as they point to the fact that the whole novel indicates that Tess is not the victim of any supernatural power, but of man and man-made circumstance. Morell insists that this is exactly Hardy's point - that Tess is the victim of a conventional idea of morality, the condemnation of society coming to her through the mouth of the man she loves, and that no perceptive reader can suppose Hardy was equating this man-made morality with Fate or anything superhuman. Hence, Morell argues we must read Hardy's phrase, "President of the Immortals", ironically, viewing it in the same light as we would Troy's flight after Fanny's death, when he "simply threw up his cards and foreswore his game for that time and always" ³² to place the blame on some external Fate, or Eustacia's reference to the "colossal Prince of the World" in The Return of the Native. Morell analyses Tess as a type

of womanhood and humanity, with all its attendant weaknesses and possibilities. "She is the old order and the new education; moved sometimes by instinct, at others by conscience and intelligence; passionate yet scrupulous; brave and long-suffering yet at times absurdly weak; murderess and adulteress yet a 'pure woman'." ³³ He locates Tess's problem not in her falling in love with Angel, but in failing to use the "naturally bright intelligence" ^(T, 224) and conscience which she alone of her family possesses. She instead drifts into postponements and a passive lethargy - a 'choosing not to choose' and a growing acceptance of those "fatalistic conventions common to field-folk and to those who associate more extensively with natural phenomena." ^(T, 244) Yet even those critics like Morell who argue against the prevailing critical consensus of Hardy's pessimism have difficulty categorizing Jude the Obscure. Morell essentially ducks the issue, evasively fence-sitting:

We may take the greater "pessimism" of Jude the Obscure - such as it is - either as reflecting temporary misgivings and darker moods increasing, perhaps, as Hardy grew older, or as something stressed deliberately as of particular relevance to this book. ³⁴

Having looked briefly and by no means exhaustively at the "socio-economic" and "philosophical" schools, Lawrence's strict preference for reading Hardy's novels as psychological dramas stands the more clearly defined through contrast with the other major approaches. However,

before turning to a consideration of Lawrence's criticism and theories of art and the novel, it seems necessary to declare a prejudice of my own. When wading through the endless tomes of Hardy criticism, I found Ian Gregor's The Great Web The Form of Hardy's Major Fiction (1972) a most helpful book for my particular area of concern. Gregor gives a thought-provoking, reasonably balanced interpretation of the novels, and also provides a useful commentary on Lawrence's own readings, as Gregor reveals his indebtedness to Lawrence's pronouncements. Hence, I have drawn quite heavily on Gregor's analyses where they agree with and supplement my own interpretations.

This is not to say, however, that Gregor has given the definitive reading of Hardy, nor that his approach is entirely without flaw. Gregor, using a mixture of strict formal criticism and a dose of historical analysis, attempts to illumine what he believes to be the principal theme of Hardy's novels, tracing the development and treatment of a "modern consciousness" through the works. Much in the fashion of Stanley Fish's "affective stylistics",³⁵ Gregor assumes there exists a normative reading of the novels, with himself cast as the "ideal reader", drawing us along with him by the sheer force of his argument. Gregor states his position:

What I am contending for is not that the critic should devote more of his time to relating the story, but rather underlining

the fact that the experience of reading a novel is that of an unfolding process, a process which has implications not just for the psychology of reading, but for literary criticism...Every novel is only gradually exposed and then it gradually recedes....³⁶

Gregor takes a swipe at that "persuasive school of current critical thinking ", New Criticism, which elevates and insists on the primacy of the text.

The weakness of this position would seem to me that it identifies the text with the meaning of the text. The text, although obviously the controlling factor, only takes on life when it is realised in the reader's response, and it is in the structuring and communication of that response that we seek the support, though not the exclusive support, of categories which are precipitates from the text, such as 'character' and 'ideas '³⁷

Despite this avowed differentiation, Gregor's approach does grow out of the New Critics' insistence on explication and close reading of the text (witness the countless painstakingly thorough analyses of short passages that Gregor provides). In this lies the strength of The Great Web. Gregor drives back to the text, weighing moments, dwelling on details, enforcing a sense of Hardy's kind of novel as an unfolding sequence existing primarily in the reading. His protracted analyses assiduously cut through the tangled growth of Hardy's fictions. Like the New Critics, Gregor stresses detailed and subtle examination of the complex interrelations and ambiguities of the component elements within a work. New Criticism is fascinated by "doubleness" in literature, by ambiguity

and irony. A quick glance at the critical works of Cleanth Brooks, William Empson and I.A. Richards clearly illustrates this. "Oppositions and contraries" are diagnosed, and usually a "tension", at times even a "reconciliation", is discovered. Gregor finds this "doubleness" to be at the heart of Hardy's creations, and leans heavily on Hardy's own description of his novels as a "series of seemings" to support this thesis:

Taken as a whole, the phrase (a series of seemings) implies a seeking for truth whose form is always provisional, whose dynamic is the tension between the story-teller and the sage, the author and the reader, a tension which, for Hardy, was the essential condition for the imaginative validity of the quest. 38

One senses, at times, that in trying to revive Hardy's reputation, Gregor may be pushing too hard, particularly in his reliance on Hardy's titles as indicators of a manifold intelligence. V. Cunningham, in a New Statesman review of Gregor's book, voices this suspicion:

Quite as often, in fact, as they embrace dialectical variety, a bracing contrariety, they merely contain confusion, or fudged thinking, or even signal rigid schematization. 39

Cunningham's objection raises some problems inherent in Gregor's methodology. For although Gregor's close readings may resemble the New Critics' search for tension, irony and paradox, they do not reveal the totality of Gregor's method. Gregor, above all, is reacting against a central tenet of

New Criticism - its recognition of "the autonomy of the work existing itself for its own sake."⁴⁰ Gregor argues forcefully that the objectivity of a text is a dangerous illusion, simply because it is so physically convincing. The illusion is one of self-sufficiency and completeness. A line of print or a page or a book is so obviously there; it can be handled, photographed or put away. It appears to be the sole repository of whatever value or meaning we associate with it. Moving away from New Criticism's treatment of the literary artifact "in itself", Gregor insists the reader's response is the prime thing to be regarded. Gregor, like Fish, holds that a kinetic art like literature does not lend itself to static interpretation because it refuses to stay still and does not let the reader stay still either. By its very nature it makes inescapable what Gregor terms "the continual dialectic of feeling" that is operative between the narrator and his narrative."⁴¹

However, in placing this emphasis on reader response, Gregor lays himself open to criticism on several counts. Gregor implicitly presupposes there is no difficulty in characterizing or generalizing about the reading experience. The chief danger in the method derives from the possibility that one may assume only a single determinable response to the reading of a given Hardy text, forgetting that what it does is likely to be slightly different for every reader. Gregor's approach, by definition,

establishes and justifies himself as the "informed idealized reader" in his efforts to make his mind the repository of potential responses a given text might call out. His assumption of a normative reading is evident even in his persistent use of first person pronouns -

"we must start by indicating the sense of this involvement..."⁴²,
 "it is important that we grasp the dramatic existence of
 that metaphysic..."⁴³ - the examples are endless. As well,
 a further significant problem arises from the question of intentionality. If one treats utterances, literary or otherwise, as strategies, this seemingly can claim too much for the conscious control of their authors. To recover an author's intentions is an extremely precarious business, one that requires the critic to indicate what the writer is doing in the text itself and what the text is doing in the genre to which it is seen as a contribution. This appears to involve a distinction between the work and its effects on the reader, since they may always be intended and not achieved, or achieved without intention. Gregor essentially dodges this issue by never raising it, and hence, fails to resolve this crucial issue in any satisfactory way.

Difficulties aside, however, Gregor's method produces significant results and his thesis that "the experience of reading a novel is that of an unfolding

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process" is persuasively supported. His analyses of the reading experience in Hardy's novels reveal^{that} a great deal is going on in their production and comprehension, for every linguistic experience is both pressuring and affecting. Gregor's approach insists we recognize that our ultimate judgements about literature are based on the primary experience of a series of responses to a flow of language in time. As well, for the purposes of this thesis, Gregor's sensitive and exacting analysis of specific passages in the novels provides a useful counterpoint against which to set Lawrence's more abstract and intuitive responses to Hardy's works. From this, we must turn to consider the basis of Lawrence's own critical theories.

CHAPTER 1

LAWRENCEAN CRITICISM

D. H. Lawrence's reputation as theorist and critic of the novel is often distorted by his notoriety as an idiosyncratic, individualistic, rebellious writer of fiction as well as criticism. John Danby's overtly antagonistic remark represents a typical misinterpretation: "D. H. Lawrence...frankly commits rape on whatever he comments on - Moby Dick, Fenimore Cooper, Galsworthy, Hardy. Understandably, he is making room for himself." ¹ However, during the past two decades a number of critics have made a concerted effort to dismiss the prevailing impression of Lawrence as an uncontrollable, impulsive critic and to replace this image with that of a critic with a message, a purpose, even a place in the tradition of British moralistic criticism. F. R. Leavis essentially initiated this renaissance of Lawrence's reputation as critic and proclaimed him the fifth member of his "great tradition" of English novelists (following Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James and Joseph Conrad). Not only did Lewis forcefully reject T. S. Eliot's verdict that Lawrence's extraordinarily independent critical method, substance and style pointed to

a presumptive "lack of intelligence and social training," he went on to paint Lawrence's critical acumen in the glowingly complimentary terms generally reserved for Eliot's own innovative critical contributions:

...it is very relevant to the insistence on supreme intelligence as being the mark of his (Lawrence's) genius to note that he was a very remarkable literary critic - by far the best critic of his day. 2

Since Leavis's ground-breaking efforts, others assessing Lawrence's status as critic have attempted to "type" or locate within some recognizable context Lawrence's style of literary analysis. David J. Gordon's D. H. Lawrence as Literary Critic (1966) places Lawrence essentially within a Romantic tradition of criticism, and pictures Lawrence as seeking a new centre of consciousness which would transcend the dualism of mind and body.³ Richard Foster,⁴ in "Criticism as Rage: D. H. Lawrence" (1959), classed Lawrence among the continuum of original "moral" critics extending from Dante to Pound. Ilana Cura-Sazdanic,⁵ in D. H. Lawrence as Critic (1969), places Lawrence in the critical tradition of Matthew Arnold, a tradition continued in the twentieth-century by F. R. Leavis, which identifies the function of criticism as the preserving of the best values of a culture.

Lawrence's basic procedure as literary critic is to bring his vision of the nature and destiny of man into

meaningful relation with works of literary art. He stands by the fundamental assumption that "art-speech is the only truth"⁶ finding in "genuine" art the deepest penetration of human consciousness into reality. Lawrence, through a series of critical essays, arrived at a general theory of the novel, offering provocative comments on the novelist's responsibility to project "life" into his novels. Lawrence makes a marked distinction between mere existence and "life": "By life, we mean something that gleams, that has the fourth-dimensional quality."^(S,529) From this Lawrence goes on to reiterate again and again the recurrent message of his own art, theory and criticism - that men and women must strive toward a "pure living relation" of give and take, the "forever trembling and changing balance".^(S,528)

Looking about at modern novels, Lawrence everywhere perceived a literature of repudiation, its attitudes and philosophies informed by the "bourgeois spirit" - Lawrence's term for the life-destructive force of modern mass-mentality which transformed living men into corpse-like "social beings". As Lawrence saw it, literature under the influence of this "bourgeois spirit", instead of revealing the relationship "between man and his circumambient universe, at the living moment",^(S,527) expressed rather a relationship of mechanically prescribed responsibilities to the organized mass of other men, or "society". Lawrence strongly opposed the tide of

sentimental humanitarianism given impetus by this "bourgeois spirit ". In a letter to Middleton Murray, he articulates this concern: "Spunk is what one wants, not introspective sentiment."⁷ In the steady progression Lawrence envisioned, "social reason" begets humanitarian sympathy, which in turn rapidly degenerates into self-sympathy. Self-consciousness becomes the last stage in the "bourgeois spirit's" progress toward death, softness and psychic degeneration in man and art. This obsessive, navel-gazing self-consciousness leads to "sex in the head" and the subtle perversion of genuine passion into nasty conceptualizations. Slamming Joyce, Dorothy Richardson and Proust in "Surgery For the Novel - or a Bomb ", Lawrence fiercely assails this "dismal, long-drawn-out comedy of the death-bed of the serious novel."⁸

It is self-consciousness picked into such fine bits that the bits are most of them invisible, and you have to go by smell. ...It's awful. And it's childish. It really is childish, after a certain age, to be absorbedly self-conscious. One has to be self-conscious at seventeen: still a little self-conscious at twenty-seven; but if we are going⁺ strong at thirty-seven, then it is a sign of arrested development, nothing else. And if it is still continuing at forty-seven, its obvious senile precocity.⁹ And there's the serious novel: senile-precocious.

Lawrence yet offers hope for the novel's future, providing his own prescription: "It's got to have the courage to tackle new propositions without using abstractions;

it's got to present us with new, really new feelings, a whole line of new emotion, which will get us out of the emotional rut."¹⁰ To accomplish this, Lawrence places his artistic faith in the "organic", "expressive" form which focuses on true, vivid relationships. With this ideal, Lawrence obviously had little patience with formula writing, excessive intellectualization or stagey self-conscious attempts to create a work of "art".¹¹ Condemning such interfering pedantry, as he thinks, for obstructing feelings and relationships, Lawrence tends to dismiss set patterns of craftsmanship¹² products of the intellect - hence, divorced from the body and the flexibility of creative flux.

Lawrence states the nature of his revolt:

...we need more looseness. We need an apparent formlessness, definite form is mechanical. We need more transition from mood to mood and from deed to deed. A great deal of the meaning of life and art lies in the apparently dull spaces, the pauses, the unimportant passages. They are truly passages, the places of passing over. 12

Lawrence here does not advocate a shift from "form" into chaos, from order into disorder. He rather argues that "form" be viewed in the correct perspective, to avoid the stagnation of ever-more subtle refinement on a never-changing paradigm (or as Lawrence wrote of certain modern novelists, "trying to discover whether the intervals are

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minor thirds or major fourths"). True "form", in Lawrence's terms, should grow from the "life-stream" of the artist's conception. Whether or not this excuses Lawrence's own "deficiencies" as craftsman or counters charges against his own novels' "formlessness", it is, nevertheless, wholly consistent with his incessant demand that art be a spontaneous discovery of life-truths, untrammelled by limiting and dead conventions. Writing in defence of this aesthetic formulation, Lawrence states:

Tell Arnold Bennett that all rules of construction hold good only for novels which are copies of other novels. A book which is not a copy of other books has its own construction, and what he calls faults, he being an old imitator, I call characteristics. 14

In accordance with this emphasis on spontaneity, Lawrence in his literary analyses eschews the usual detached critical stance which seemed to him an impertinent affectation of superiority and instead takes up hand-to-hand combat. Lawrencean criticism proceeds quite deliberately beyond the bounds which formal criticism usually sets for itself - elucidation of the text and its relationship to literary tradition. Although a good deal of modern criticism is more ideological than it pretends to be, it is seldom so directly harnessed to such an explicit and individual moral vision. Lawrence maintained a view of criticism which prescribed that critics, like

creative artists, be "emotionally alive in every fibre"
 - a difficult task, for it requires the critic to demonstrate
 intellectual capability, "moral" honesty, as well as total
 freedom and openness of sensibility.¹⁵ Developing these
 critical standards, Lawrence writes in his essay on John
 Galsworthy:

Literary criticism can be no more than a
 reasoned account of the feeling produced
 upon the critic by the book he is criticizing.
 Criticism can never be a science: it is,
 in the first place, much too personal, and
 in the second, it is concerned with values
 science ignores. The touchstone is emotion,
 not reason. We judge a work of art by its
 effect on our sincere and vital emotion, and
 nothing else. All the critical twiddle-
 twaddle about style and form, all this pseudo-
 scientific classifying and analysing of books
 in an imitation - botanical fashion, is mere
 impertinence and mostly dull jargon. 16

In pursuing this style of literary criticism
 intuitively felt on the emotional pulses, Lawrence sets
 himself the literary task to "save the tale from the
 artist who created it".¹⁷ His provocative interpretations
 sometimes fly in the teeth of conflicting textual evidence.
 Lawrence presumes that he can reveal the deeper, truer
 implications of a work that the artist himself may not
 have been conscious of or have recognized. It must be
 said that, in the process of this revelation, Lawrence
 tries, often successfully, to identify "truth" in the
 work with the truth of his own moral vision - to merge

what the work in fact deals with and what Lawrence feels it should say. Lawrence consistently exhibits an ability to detect the hidden intentions of "art-speech", and as well, a more problematic ability to shape his insights into a vast moral argument, difficult to separate from the descriptive quality of his criticism because of his formidable moral passion and rhetorical skill.¹⁸

The aggressive, harsh and highly subjective perspective of his critical essays, reviews and letters can divert attention from Lawrence's often astute and incisive critical responses. There is a tendency to think of Lawrence's criticism as a kind of brilliant, impressionistic response which distances us from his subject, either because of personal preoccupations or because of a summarizing loftiness of argument whose grand conclusions appear but tenuously linked to the specific work he addresses. Yet on a closer look, Lawrence's critical analyses are generally firmly rooted in a genuine sense of the particular, which underpins and supports the whole even as he moves quickly to a discussion of the larger implications of the work. Lawrence's critical intelligence is manifest in the penetration of questions asked, the subtlety and flexibility with which discriminations are made, and the skill with which arguments are sustained. What is remarkable

in Lawrence is not that he was sometimes wrested from his grip on a critical subject by the counterforce of some personal obsession, but that his criticism so often combined force with relevance.

When reading Lawrence's criticism, we must be prepared for contradictions and shocks. It is often repetitive and occasionally hysterical, even vituperative. But all his fierce attacks and his unarranged outpourings of feelings and perceptions rather strengthen than weaken the fact that he has "the courage to admit what he feels, as well as the flexibility to know what he feels". Careful study of his critical analyses reveals that Lawrence's remarks are not erratic, but are generally consistent with the underlying principles of his art-life vision. For Lawrence passionately believed that books should help us "to be alive, to be man alive, to be whole man alive,"¹⁹ and in a sense, his ever-intense personal engagement with works of literature may be his critical forte. W. H. Auden states the case:

He is so passionately interested in the work he is talking about and so little interested in his reputation as a critic that, even when he is violently and quite unfairly attacking an author, he makes him sound far more exciting and worth reading than most critics make one sound whom they are professing to praise. 20

Time after time Lawrence demonstrates an uncanny, highly-developed ability to capture the essential meaning

of a work of art in its literary-cultural contexts. Yet he does not arrive at his occasionally startling critical conclusions through an objective systematic study of the works. Lawrence refuses to adhere to the "academic" practice of slotting literature into tidy categories. The flexible, freewheeling style of critical essay he invariably adopts enables him to pass naturally beyond a concern for art proper to emphasize its relationship to the civilization of which it is a vital expression. Jumping off from specific literary judgements and discriminations, Lawrence does not hesitate to range freely and far afield, touching on art, morality, society, myth and history. Alfred Kazin, in discussing the function of criticism, describes this critical approach and defends its validity:

Above all, the critic who works with this sense of the age in his bones, who sees himself working toward the future that man must build for himself, is always a writer. He writes for the public, not to a few imagined co-specialists; he writes dramatically, marshalling his evidence in a way that pure logic would never approve and pure scholarship would never understand, but which is justifiable, if it succeeds, as moral argument in the great tradition of literature. 21

The excitement of Lawrence's criticism lies in the fact that it is synthetic as well as analytic. We watch Lawrence struggle with himself as he comes to terms with his subject, and sense a developing artistic structure, a

myth being forged in the forming crucible of his mind. For Lawrence's criticism is also art - though perhaps not in the sense of being highly wrought and "formed ", for Lawrence's expression, whether in letters or critical essays, is characteristically somewhat fragmented and disordered. But it is art in the sense of effect. It is overwhelmingly alive - there is a subjective immediacy and breathless energy to his criticism, an intensity of caring. And as spontaneous and subjective as his critical performance may seem, Lawrence consciously knew, philosophically and theoretically, what he expected of art. Moreover, he knew how to use those expectations as principles, even as the basis and threshold for a general method of criticism peculiarly his own.

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However, although Lawrence's gift for animated, and despite its repetitiveness, incisive discourse is obvious, it does place a considerable burden on a reader who would follow his argument closely. The peculiarity of his style is reflected in the frequent violations of logic and shifting inconsistent terminology. In trying to write about the deep life of the spirit in language used for other purposes and in an age where mass communication rapidly caused fresh phraseology to become stale, Lawrence was struggling with language itself. This problem crops up in the Study of Thomas Hardy, where Lawrence redefines for

himself the nature and purpose of the novel as literary form in terms of an examination of Hardy's fiction. More than a personal encounter, it establishes an intellectual framework which employs a complex method by means of which Hardy's art is subjected to analysis. The Study is built on the proposition that "the effort to mate spirit with body, body with spirit, is the crying confusion and pain of our times." (S, 474) Lawrence envisions a struggle across the ages of two opposing wills, Law and Love, now one in domination, then the other, with historic moments of reconciliation before the balance is again lost. This recurring movement from one extreme to the other also operates on the level of personal relationships - between men and women, as well as within themselves. The ideal relationship is envisaged as a meeting on equal terms of two people who have themselves achieved full individuality and transcend their duality in the balance attained between them.

Difficulties arise not particularly from the thought, but from Lawrence's somewhat confusing terminology. "Law" is the "female" principle - the natural law of the body, instinct, sensation, and somewhat paradoxically, "phallic consciousness". Set against this is the counter movement of the spirit, Love, a condition of knowing, abstraction and "mental consciousness". The terms make the

age-old distinction between spirit and flesh, but Lawrence's idiosyncratic terminology stands as a measure of his rebellion²⁴ against the Christian implications of this division. In reaction against traditional denigration of the flesh, the "soul" is appended as the consciousness of the body (Law) and placed in opposition to the "spirit" of Love as Lawrence attempts to redress what he views as centuries of imbalance and prejudice. When this theory of Law and Love is applied to the relationships of men and women, it leads Lawrence to insights of profound critical intelligence. H.M. Daleski points out, however, that when Lawrence forces the theory onto "alien" material, he is reduced to using²⁵ it as a blunt, bludgeoning instrument. Law and Love seen as historical forces essentially convey only a broad, vague generalization.

The imbalance of these principles of Law and Love has tremendous repercussions in art. Lawrence celebrates the ideal achievement of joyful "religious" art, which can truthfully express achieved equilibrium between man and woman, "male" and "female" principles. However, where there is an imbalance or failure to achieve the desired consummation, the author may "dishonestly" attempt to falsify his art. If the artist truthfully records the victory of one principle over the other, the disappointment of that failure may paralyse him and prevent him from

moving forward in his art. Alternately, in confronting the experience of himself and his age, the artist may attempt falsely^{to} picture a reconciliation of principles. As the artist strives to show what should be and opposes the fait accompli of his time, he must inevitably exaggerate or distort - adding "maleness" where the art is weak in individual consciousness, "femaleness" where the "spirit" is in excess. ²⁶ Lawrence perceives in Hardy both responses - the accurate but tragic depiction of the victory of one principle, and the somewhat futile efforts to compensate for this deficiency and imbalance in his art. Lawrence rewords what he sees as Hardy's metaphysic in these terms:

"There is no reconciliation between Love and the Law," says Hardy. "The spirit of Love must always succumb before the blind, stupid, but overwhelming power of the Law."
(S, 480)

Lawrence portrays Hardy as an artist of self-division, strongly rooted in the Law, yet tortured like Job or his Jude: "It is the same cry all through Hardy, this curse upon birth in the flesh, and this unconscious adherence to the flesh." ^(S, 481) Lawrence delineates the problem in these terms: Hardy creates as an artist of the Law, strong in unconscious and sensuous understanding. Yet living in an age of selfless love and lacking a confident spiritual consciousness, he calls upon the bourgeois mentality of his times to reinforce his mind, to give an

irrelevant tragic explanation to his own special dilemma. Lawrence casts Hardy as "something of an Angel Clare" (S, 489), isolating in him a predilection for one side of being (variously expressed in the Study as Love, Male, Spirit) and a corresponding prejudice against the other (Law, Female, Flesh). As Lawrence sees it, this manifests itself in Hardy's inability to reflect being as whole and harmonious. Hardy indulges his "prejudice" by consistently depicting the flesh as too strong or too weak, as destructive or insufficiently fortifying.

Lawrence considers a wide range of Hardy characters who struggle toward self-realization and fulfillment, clearly setting apart and underlining those characteristics of Hardy which most appealed to him. Lawrence openly approves of Hardy's characters in so far as their basic values and struggles are concerned: "none of [them] care very much for money, or immediate self-preservation, and all of them are struggling hard to come into being." (S, 410) Yet while effectively dramatizing his characters' physical and psychological conflicts, often through symbolic use of nature, Hardy failed, in Lawrence's estimation, to provide his characters with any real opportunity to "come into being" or to achieve that personal discovery and satisfaction that can be gained, as far as Lawrence is concerned, only through love.

The via media to being, for man and woman - is love, and love alone. Having achieved and accomplished love, then the man passes into the unknown... The tale is about becoming complete, or about the failure to become complete. (S, 410)

Throughout the Study, Lawrence is preoccupied by the individual's relationship to society. He admires those characters - Bathsheba, Eustacia, Henchard, Tess, Sue and Jude - who assert themselves and try to rise above the often crippling norms of the puritanical and conservative status quo, yet bemoans their almost inevitable, fated destruction. Only those who accept society's dictates and abide by them in passive good faith ultimately survive and prosper in Hardy's fictional world. Lawrence himself obviously prefers the rebels, the courageous self-assertive beings, to those submissive members of society and hence, criticizes Hardy for surrendering his most willful unorthodox characters to society. Hardy compulsively defeats the "aristocrats," his great individuals in quest of fulfillment, by forcing upon them some defeating adherence to community and convention. As Hardy's individualists encounter a series of misfortunes, their tragic flaws are often defined or measured by the extent to which they deviate from social norms: Eustacia in her head-strong refusal to submit to Egdon's confinement and restricting expectations; Tess with her premarital sexual encounter and illegitimate child; Jude and his ambitious

desire to transcend his working-class origins to become a Christminster academic. Lawrence concludes that regardless of his intentions or sympathies, Hardy stands "with the average against the exception", representing the interests of humanity or the "community" as a whole while ignoring or condemning the individual interest. ^(S, 439) In Lawrence's opinion, Hardy sacrifices his own instinctual preference for the individual to his tragic theory of life and to the presiding social dictates of the day.

From this, Lawrence launches into an extended discussion of Hardy's "prédilection d'artiste" ^(S, 435) for the aristocrat and his "moral antagonism" to him. Although Hardy's private artistic sympathy appears to lie with the exceptional individual set against the community, Hardy as conscious moralist must show the non-conformist's destruction. Lawrence insists on the superiority of Hardy's unconscious, sensuous understanding to his conscious metaphysic. These "aristocrats" are too much alive for the moral abstractions of Hardy's novels to contain dramatically. They seem to break loose from the intentions of their creator, to set up an overwhelming counterforce of meaning and feeling of their own. Lawrence says of Hardy's fatally-flawed aristocrats, "the question of their unfortunate end is begged in the beginning." ^(S, 439) He sees Hardy shying away from fully tragic characterization,

creating Jude, Tess and Eustacia with a radical frailty, a "weak life-flow"; "...a certain inevitable and unconquerable adhesion to the community." (S, 439) Lawrence claims that Hardy's heroes never transcend the conventional moral frame; that their deaths inevitably result from their "own lack of strength to bear the isolation and the exposure or by direct revenge from the community, or from both." (S, 411)

Hence, they remain pathetic, not tragic figures. As Lawrence rights the balance and takes Hardy's thumb from the scale,²⁷ the exceptional aspirers - particularly Eustacia, Tess, Sue and Jude - merely offend the self-preserving community ethic. They do not wage war on God or on the eternally unalterable and invincible morality of life, but only on society. As R.M. Swigg says, "They struggle as 'more or less pioneers' half in, half out of the smaller scheme, 'free and yet unfree, preaching the walled city and looking to the waste.'"²⁸

Lawrence applies his own "proper" moral standards of judgement to rescue the tale from the artist - "The final aim of every living thing, creature, or being is the full achievement of itself." (S, 403) Lawrence sets aside Hardy's own "weak" tragic form, "where transgression against the social code is made to bring destruction, as though the social code worked our irrevocable fate." (S, 420) Liberating those characters seeking fulfillment from the "commonplace" grasp of their author, Lawrence elevates them to what he feels is the appropriate Shakespearean or Greek pattern of

tragedy. Lawrence discusses sinners and victims on the wider plane of morality he defines, meting out sympathy or condemnation appropriate to their ability to recognize the laws of their own and others' beings.

CHAPTER II

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

Because of all the speculative material dominating a critical study that Lawrence himself termed "mostly philosophicalish, slightly about Hardy ", it may seem that Lawrence is merely exploiting the ostensible subject of his inquiry as a jumping-off point for a freewheeling scamper through history, sociology, psychology, mythic perceptions and philosophy. Actually, Lawrence is proceeding on the premise that he cannot intelligently discuss Hardy's problems as a novelist without placing them in a broader literary-cultural context. Much in the Study leads one away from Hardy only to lead one back to him with enlarged understanding. For even when Lawrence is not discussing Hardy explicitly, Hardy hovers in the wings, a persistent implicit presence, providing points of suggestivity which Lawrence utilizes as a natural symbolic language. When discussing the "gaudy, fleeting poppy ", his symbol for that gorgeous excess of life concerned only with its "evanescence and its being ", Lawrence writes:

...it hangs at the brink of the void,
scarlet and radiant for a little while

immanent on the unknown, a signal, an outpost, an advance-guard, a forlorn, splendid flag quivering from the brink of the unfathomed void...And the day is richer for a poppy...something is, which was not...And I wish it were true of us. I wish we were all ^{like} kindled bonfires on the edge of space, marking out the advance-posts. (S,409)

Fiercely attacking the "tight economical bud of caution and thrift and self-preservation," ^(S,401) Lawrence adopts a position similar to that advocated in Blake's proverb from Hell:

"The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom."²

Exposure, vulnerability and a heightened sensitivity to the promises of life are necessary to achieve the "maximum of being" ^(S,402). And Lawrence argues his case through Hardy's images of the signal, the outpost and the bonfire Eustacia recklessly lights to summon her lover as she reaches out for fulfillment and struggles to "come into being". The Return of the Native supplies yet another image of this excess, the brimming-over of life-force, this time drawn from the gambling scene between Venn and Wildeve:

When is a glow-worm a glow-worm? When she's got a light on her tail. What is she when she hasn't got a light on her tail? Then she's a mere worm, an insect. When is a man a man? When he is alight with life. Call it excess? If it is missing, there is no man, only a creature, a clod, undistinguished. (S,421)

R. M. Swigg points out the imaginative connection Lawrence is here undoubtedly making with Hardy's vision of the blinded Clym, merging with the furze of ^{the} Heath, "not more

distinguishable from the scene around him than the green caterpillar from the leaf it feeds on."³

If Hardy's scenes and images partly inspire the subtle symbolic texture of the Study, Lawrence finds in Egdon Heath the imaginative spur to consider the nature of Hardy's tragedy. Lawrence believes Egdon to be "the great tragic power in the book"; the landscape possesses a moral authority which transcends any human activity. (S, 415)

This is a constant revelation in Hardy's novels: that there exists a great background, vital and vivid, which matters more than the people who move upon it. (S, 419) ✓

Contemplating and playing with the concept of Egdon and all that it symbolically encompasses, Lawrence visibly feels his way through his evolving definitions of tragedy and morality. Actually, John Paterson's discussion of the form of Return of the Native applies with equal relevance to the way in which Lawrence's imaginative grappling with Hardy progresses: "Up to a certain point the work of a powerful imagination not fully aware of its own nature, it comes increasingly to be the work of an imagination awake to, and in control of, the possibilities it itself has created."⁴ Lawrence superimposes his own "vast incomprehensible pattern of some primal morality greater than ever the human mind can grasp" (S, 419) onto Hardy's "little, pathetic pattern of man's moral life and

struggle, pathetic, almost ridiculous." ^(S,419) In the ever-widening, encompassing arc of his emerging vision, Lawrence reads Hardy's Return of the Native as a play within a play; the "charmed circle" of "the little human morality play" carried on within the "stupendous theatre" of the "vast uncomprehended and incomprehensible morality of nature or of life itself, surpassing human consciousness." ^(S,419)

Egdon, in Lawrence's reading, stands as a metaphor for the dynamic, dark forces of "instinctive life" ^(S,415) and the "unfathomed moral forces of nature." ^(S,420) Source of the potency and indomitable creativity of Return of the Native, the Heath throws up Eustacia, Wildeve, Mistress Yeobright and Clym, then tosses them off in an unthinking, unconscious fashion as "one year's accidental crop" ^(S,415). Egdon remains, ^(RN,19) inviolate and eternal - dominating the novel geographically and dramatically as the "pole and axis of this heathery world." And, as his persistent personification of the Heath throughout the Study indicates, Lawrence views Egdon as the only truly significant character of the piece. Applying this critical standard, Lawrence dismisses the exhausted, failed humans, the suffering, struggling individuals, as insignificant when measured against the surging, inexhaustible cyclical rhythms of the Heath.

What matters if some are drowned or dead,
and others preaching or married: what matter,
any more than the withering heath, the

reddening berries, the seedy furze, and
 the dead fern of one autumn of Egdon?
 The Heath persists. Its body is strong
 and fecund, it will bear many more crops
 besides this. (S, 415)

With these priorities set, Lawrence takes "savage satisfaction" in observing the "black, powerful fecundity" of the Heath engulf and reclaim the "spilled and wasted" contents of the small lives it carelessly heaved up. Like so many weeds "broken off at their stem," Mrs. Yeobright, Eustacia and Wildeve die and are taken back into the Heath. In response to this, Lawrence in the sonorous tones of Genesis states, "It is very good",^(S, 415) disregarding Hardy's irony and pity for the defeated, yet enduring, human spirit.

However, as persuasive and subtly insinuating as Lawrence's reading may be, "Egdon is very much a tract of land, upon which people constantly walk, and have their houses, little more than pinpoints of light in an enveloping darkness."⁶ Hardy's Egdon is stoic, unchanging and enduring. ✓ Lawrence's preoccupation with the symbolic centrality of the Heath does illuminate and register the significance of Egdon's presence in the novel, but Lawrence fundamentally alters Hardy's focus and emphasis by ignoring the countervailing forces the inhabitants of the Heath impose on it. Although Lawrence recognizes and pays tribute to the timelessness ✓ and emptiness of the Heath's sombre, latent power and the way in which it transcends or ignores human life, he disregards the fact that this comprises only part of Hardy's

vision.

Such a perfect, delicate and necessary finish did the figure give to the dark pile of hills that it seemed to be the only obvious justification of their outline...The scene was strangely homogeneous, in that the vale, the upland, the barrow, and the figure above it amounted only to unity. (RN,20)

Individuals are inextricably bound to the Heath's overwhelming presence, yet the human form, and by extension, the "little morality play ", form the necessary pieces to complete the puzzle of the Heath's total meaning.

It is the mode of vision, the perception of those slighted individuals who precariously eke out their existence and tenuously maintain their individuality in light of the Heath's anonymity, that alters the Heath's "grim old face." (RN,347) As Blake said, "Every Eye sees differently, As the Eye, Such the object." ⁷ All the "exceptional aspirers ", and Lawrence as well, fail to see "the vast tract of unenclosed land" as Hardy does - a X neutral stage for the enactment of the human drama. For Wildeve, but particularly for Eustacia, the Heath is a "gaol ", a place of "fearful gloom and loneliness" (RN,75) that stands between her and the bright fashionable round of parties, pretty clothes and smitten admirers she believes she craves. By the novel's climactic conclusion, when Eustacia is committed to escaping from Egdon's imprisonment, the very Heath itself reflects the emotional turmoil and

tortured, whirling chaos of her thoughts.

She followed the path towards Rainbarrow, occasionally stumbling over twisted furze-roots, tufts of rushes, or oozing lumps of fleshy fungi, which at this season lay scattered about the heath like the rotten liver and lungs of some colossal animal. The moon and stars were closed up by cloud and rain to the degree of extinction.
(RN, 353)

The Heath takes on an aura of perverse malignancy; her personal feelings and attitudes are transferred onto the landscape.

Although the same total blackness and driving rain confront Thomasin as she ventures out in search of Wildeve, she who has always comfortably viewed Egdon as a "nice wild place to walk in" (RN, 347) crosses what would appear to be an entirely different landscape, emblematic of the vast discrepancy between the two women's inner psychological states.

To her there were not, as to Eustacia, demons in the air, and malice in every bush and bough. The drops which lashed her face were not scorpions, but prosy rain; Egdon in the mass was no monster whatever, but impersonal open ground. Her fears of the place were rational, her dislikes of its worst moods reasonable. At this time it was in her view a windy, wet place, in which a person might experience much discomfort, lose the path without care, and possibly catch cold.
(RN, 363)

Images of twisted deformity and diseased internal organs of an animate, malevolent Heath surround the distraught and volatile Eustacia. Thomasin's prosaic, commonsense

approach to Egdon inspires in her not fantastic thoughts of "nocturnal scenes of disaster...all that is terrible and dark in history and legend"^(RN, 353) but the practical concerns of chill, discomfort and the possibility of head-cold. Neither vision of the Heath suffices alone; both are necessary to the dual-edged complexity of Hardy's setting. Eustacia's nightmarish, surrealistic landscape dovetails more closely with Lawrence's view of the "primal primitive earth" - "Egdon, whose dark soil was strong and crude and organic as the body of the beast."^(S, 415) Hence, Lawrence makes an absolute identification between Eustacia and the Heath: "She was Egdon, the powerful, eternal origin seething with production."^(S, 418) What Lawrence fails to consider is Thomasin's half of Hardy's creation - the "day-light" world of social concerns and prosaic practicality, which may not inspire the exotic excitement of Eustacia's perspective, but nonetheless demands a consideration and a reckoning.

The dark, wild and passionate Eustacia receives the bulk of Lawrence's sympathy, as he identifies her as one seeking "some form of self-realization; she wants to be herself, to attain herself."^(S, 414) Lawrence dismisses her yearning for the Parisian social whirl of the beau monde as a delusion of her romantic imagination, a false mental conception of her true inner desires.

Eustacia thought she wanted the hats and bonnets of Paris. Perhaps she was right... She thought life there, in Paris, would be tropical, and all her energy and passion out of Egdon would there come into handsome flower. And if Paris real had been Paris as she imagined it, no doubt she was right, and her instinct was soundly expressed. But Paris real was not Eustacia's imagined Paris. Where was her imagined Paris, the place where her powerful nature could come to blossom? Beside some strong-passioned, unconfined man, her mate. (S, 416)

(RN, 202)
Eustacia swears she will "be something" — should Clym take her to Paris as his wife, but her delusions are quickly dashed as she lives on in relative penury in a small cottage on the Heath, her ardent young husband reduced to a half-blind furze-cutter who after working sixteen hours a day comes home to sleep the remainder. Her "youthful dream" shattered, she passionately questions Wildeve - "do I desire unreasonably much in wanting what is called life - music, poetry, passion, war and all the beating and pulsing that are going on in the great arteries of the world?" (RN, 283)
This appetite for "life ", a dynamic and vital drive, attracts Lawrence to Eustacia.

Hardy himself, like Lawrence, can sympathize with Eustacia, for the way in which her intensities of feeling and her capacity for response are never to find satisfactory expression. Yet in Lawrence's insistence that Eustacia could realize herself only through passional fulfillment with an equal, "her mate ", he overlooks the dual-edged presentation Hardy gives Eustacia. Termed the "raw material

of a divinity" with "passions and instincts which make
 a model goddess" ^(RN,71), her isolated and aloof anonymity as
 she stands gazing out over the Heath from the top of the
 Rainbarrow recall the tragic, beautiful woman, the exceptional
 aristocrat Lawrence analyses in his Study. He classifies
 her among those who fall "before the weight of the average,
 the lawful crowd, but who in more primitive times would
 have formed romantic rather than tragic figures." ^(S,438)

What Lawrence leaves out of the account is the
 day-dreaming schoolgirl Eustacia, who delights in her
 "uniqueness ", her individuality and her social non-
 conformity. With gentle irony Hardy undercuts his Olympian
 "Queen of the Night" with the complementary picture of
 the girl whose "high gods were William the Conqueror,
 Strafford, and Napoleon Buonaparte ", who favored the
 Philistines in battle, "and had wondered if Pontius Pilate
 were as handsome as he was frank and fair." ^(RN,76) This
 Eustacia cleaned cupboards and sang bawdy songs on Sunday
 so she could sing psalms and read the Scripture weekdays
 out of sheer enjoyment of her own perversity and "difference ".
 Ian Gregor points out how this tension, this "double tone ",
 can operate within a single sentence:

To be loved to madness - such was her
 great desire. Love was to her one
 cordial which could drive away the
 eating loneliness of her days. And

she seemed to long for the abstraction
called passionate love more than for
any particular lover. (RN,75)

As Gregor justly indicates, "from one point of view this reads as a judicial description of adolescent fervour"; a young girl in love with the idea of being passionately desired and coveted.⁸ Alternately, "the eating loneliness of her days" strikes a more sombre, tragic tone, for Eustacia is essentially right to seek the cordial "love ". As Lawrence maintains, only it can lead her to an understanding of herself and her identity, release and satisfy the "sad and stifled warmth within her ". "That such a consciousness can accompany behavior which is self-deceiving and foolish is not something which Hardy is concerned to deny or excuse; but equally it is not something which can conceal or dispel the genuine tragedy which is involved."⁹

Eustacia turns initially to Wildeve for her consummation, but he soon proves unsatisfactory. Lawrence acutely recognizes his weakness and vacillating nature - "Wildeve, shifty and unhappy, attracted always from outside and never from within, can neither stand with nor without the established system."^(S, 414) Having married Thomasin, he appears committed to the "system" ; yet he is ^{drawn} irresistibly, like a moth to a flame, to Eustacia, whose magnetism and attraction only increase for him when she becomes Clym's wife and the barriers of marriage and relation are thrown

up between them. Hardy heavily underscores this fact in the scene at the country dance:

To clasp as his for five minutes what was another man's through all the rest of the year was a kind of thing he of all men could appreciate...indeed, it may be asserted that signing the marriage register with Thomasin was the natural signal to his heart to return to its first quarters, and that the extra complication of Eustacia's marriage was the one addition required to make that return compulsory.
(RN, 264)

Eustacia, when committed to eloping with Wildeve, provides the clearest expression of her own recognition of the futility of any relationship with the inadequate Wildeve, who, as Lawrence says, "had no positive being". She cries out, "He's not great enough for me to give myself to - he does not suffice for my desire!" (RN, 354)

Egdon supplies but one suitable "mate" for Eustacia - the "native", Clym Yeobright. "He was born out of passionate Egdon to live as a passionate being", (S, 416) yet according to Lawrence he commits the same error as Eustacia and mistakes his true nature and desires, suppressing and containing his feelings as he submits to the "system". Lawrence treats Clym more harshly for his impotent failure to "be" and for his willingness "to live in an abstraction, in a generalization". (S, 416) He focuses on Hardy's lengthy analysis of the "mutually destructive interdependence of spirit and flesh" operative in Clym.

...an inner strenuousness was preying upon an outer symmetry, and they rated his look as singular... His countenance was overlaid with legible meanings. Without being thoughtworn he yet had certain marks derived from a perception of his surroundings, such as are not infrequently found on men at the end of the four or five years of endeavor which follow the close of placid pupillage. He already showed that thought is a disease of the flesh, and indirectly bore evidence that the ideal physical beauty is incompatible with emotional development and a full recognition of the coil of things. Mental luminousness must be fed with the oil of life, even though there is already a physical need for it; and the pitiful sight of two demands on one supply was just showing itself here. (RN,142-3)

Lawrence protests against Hardy's descriptive analysis -

"One does not catch thought like a fever: one produces it." (S,416)

Reversing Hardy's emphasis and re-proportioning Clym's character to fit his own preoccupations, Lawrence denies that Clym suffered from the pressures of the flesh impinging on his mental consciousness. Rather, he styles Clym a mental eunuch, incapable of originality or creativity in being or act because he frustrates the natural movement of his life-forces. Hardy explicitly elevates Clym's mind and spirit in the statement, "As is usual with bright natures, the deity that lies ignominiously chained within an ephemeral human carcass shone out of him like a ray." (RN,143) But Lawrence heatedly disputes this through a series of rapid-fire rhetorical questions, carefully weighted in his favor by the very nature of the language he employs: "was it his blood, which rose dark and potent

out of Egdon, which hampered and confined the deity, or was it his mind, that house built of extraneous knowledge (S, 417) and guarded by his will, which formed the prison?" (emphasis mine).

In a similar fashion Lawrence derides the notion that Clym's "return" to the Heath for the altruistic purpose of bringing education and culture to the "natives" is a high-minded, noble gesture made at the expense of a promising business career. Lawrence sneers at this desire "to teach little Egdon boys in school", seeing in it a "deep, very subtle cowardice", a seeking to live in moral abstraction and thus avoid the effort, the cost involved in struggling "at the quick of himself into being" (S, 414). Clym's lofty plans "to preach to the Egdon eremites that they might rise to a serene comprehensiveness without going through the process of enriching themselves" may, in point of fact, be a pipe dream, but Lawrence's vitriolic criticism reaches far beyond this. Lawrence, prejudiced by his own preference for "blood-consciousness", rejects the idea that Clym could provide any possible enrichment or broaden any horizons for individuals solidly and instinctually rooted in the "primal soil" and "strong, free flow of life" of Egdon.

Lawrence can more easily condone Eustacia's fantasizing of Paris, her dreams of the "gay world" and "town pleasure" through Clym than he can Clym's idealizing

of his teaching scheme through Eustacia. Where Eustacia's goal, though misdirected, is an "instinctively enlarging movement",¹⁰ Clym's grand gesture of altruism is dismissed as a narrowing into abstraction and systematized intellectualization. Clym finds the passional force of the sensuous Eustacia intensely attractive, yet manages to subvert even this to his goal - "his scheme had somehow become glorified. A beautiful woman had been intertwined with it." Lawrence maintains that in marrying Eustacia, Clym made at least a motion in the right direction - "here was a move into being on his part" (S,417). But in the battle between "inner strenuousness" and "outer symmetry", Clym, in Lawrence's interpretation, identifies himself with the "system", and in doing so attempts to "abstract" and thus neutralize Eustacia's craving for "being". In one sense a forerunner of Angel Clare, Clym is identified by Lawrence as such - "But as soon as he got her, she became an idea to him and had to fit into his system of ideas." (S,417) In much the same way, Clare will face Tess after her "confession" of her past and deny that she is the woman he loves, while yet paying homage to the image of idealized "spiritual" woman he had created in her likeness - "another woman in your shape" (T,272).

Clym mistakes and significantly misreads both Eustacia and Egdon. Lawrence, in one of the Study's

powerful imagistic strands, creates a metaphor not only for Clym's errors in assessment and judgement, but for all those whose vision lacks the perceptive acuity to pierce the superficial and thus reveal the essential and elemental. Clym "skated over heaven and hell, and having made a map of the surface, thought he knew all. But underneath and among his mapped world, the eternal fecundity worked on, heedless of him and his arrogance." (S, 418)

Lawrence implicitly echoes the Blakean precept: "If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite."¹¹ But Clym "has closed himself

up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern."¹²

Although Blake was advocating visionary perception as opposed to the rigid restrictions of the Lockean empirical approach to knowledge and experience, the parallel with Clym holds true, in as much as he has shut out and blindly ignored all but the "little of the static surface he could see and map out." (S, 418)

With his unwavering faith in the rational and "mental", his "maps" and "charts", Clym pays no heed to the intuitive workings of his own "heart's mysterious resonance" or the greater scheme of the dark unfathomed life-force, mistaking the iceberg's tip for its entirety - "he thought his map was the thing itself." (S, 418) Hence it is symbolically appropriate that Hardy should cripple Clym through his weakened and dimmed

eyesight. For truly, in blocking out the instinctual "blood-consciousness" side of his existence, Clym becomes, in Lawrence's terms, "half-blind".

Clym and Eustacia also fail to find passionate fulfillment because of Mrs. Yeobright's implacable hostility toward their marriage. Interestingly, Lawrence himself neglects to draw the obvious analogy between the intense, binding relationship of Clym and his mother and that of Paul and Gertrude Morel in his recently completed Sons and Lovers. The parallels are strongly apparent. Like Gertrude Morel, Mrs. Yeobright is a woman driven by a burning ambition for her son's success, having herself "come down" somewhat in life, "a curate's daughter who had once dreamt of doing better things", Mrs. Yeobright's bitter opposition to Eustacia parallels Gertrude Morel's resentment of Miriam. Although Mrs. Yeobright throws up Eustacia's past reputation ("the hussy")^(RN,197) as the reason for her intense dislike of the girl, we are made to feel, as we do in Lawrence's novel, that this rationalization simply conceals an innate antagonism toward anyone who competes for her son's love. Hardy explores the mutual psychopathy of the love between Clym and his mother, emphasizing its symbiotic intensity: "he (Clym) was a part of her...their discourses were as if carried on between the right and left hands of the same body."^{(RN,193)13} In marrying

Eustacia, Clym makes the break and takes decisive action in a way that Paul Morel cannot while his mother lives, and as a result is severed not only from his mother, but from his own being. The closeness of their bond, their love which "in its absolutely indestructible form... reaches a profundity in which all exhibition of itself is painful"^(RN,192), cannot withstand the challenge of the interloper. The division between them passes beyond articulation; speech is no longer a valid form of communication:

He kissed her cheek, and departed in great misery...The position had been such that nothing more could be said without, in the first place, breaking down a barrier; and that was not to be done. (RN,214)

Mrs. Yeobright attains the grandeur of a fatal victim in death, transformed from a lonely, embittered woman, brought down by her own folly, Eustacia's fatal indecision and the inexorable force of circumstances. Terming her an "old rigid pillar of the system ", Lawrence recognizes Mrs. Yeobright as as exceptional individual - "The pressure on her is too great. She is weakened from the inside also, for her nature is non-conventional; it cannot own the bounds."^(S,415) In her own way, Mrs. Yeobright's determination to retain the bond with her son is as excessive as Eustacia's craving for escape from Egdon. Both are strong-willed, powerful, passionate women who

exceed the "bound ", if only through their strong-minded insistence on obtaining the objects of their desires. By the very intensity of their feelings and emotional responses they go beyond the commonplace, disrupt the established "system ", and are destroyed. Yet Mrs. Yeobright, in a sense, has the final word. Clym hands his mother "the laurels of victory ", as Jessie Chambers was later to say of Lawrence's own portrayal of the struggle between Miriam and Mrs. Morel over Paul in Sons and Lovers.

Clym glorifies his mother's nature; he dwells on the fact that she was never malicious even in anger and retained the "meekness of a child" beneath her mantle of (RN, 329) pride. Even in his final loneliness after Thomasin's marriage to Venn, his thoughts return to his mother: "she was the sublime saint whose radiance even his tenderness (RN, 404) for Eustacia could not obscure". Lawrence locates an essential insincerity in Clym's over-wrought hysterical grief. "His remorse over his mother is adulterated with sentiment; it is exaggerated by the push of tradition (S, 414) behind it." Clym rounds on Eustacia, denouncing her as his mother's murderer in the ranting rage of a madman. Ian Gregor argues that the climactic confrontation scene between Eustacia and Clym lacks the emotional intensity Hardy desired largely because there has never been any

intensity of feeling between them in the first place. Its absence has been masked only by ^{the}vehemence of Mrs. Yeobright's opposition.¹⁴ The only "genuine" feeling we witness between the couple occurs at their parting, when the shaken and trembling Eustacia cannot tie her bonnet strings, and Clym does so, resisting her for once unconscious charm and remaining harshly judgemental and detached. This vignette captures the essence of this thwarted relationship, as both stubbornly refuse to see each other. Indicative of Hardy's concern for individual consciousness, the scene recalls a similarly symbolically encompassing moment in Jude the Obscure, where the experience Sue and Jude share among the roses at the agricultural show crystallizes and momentarily reveals the best and brightest in their "spiritual" coupling.

Emphasizing human relationships and vital forces in the landscape almost exclusively, Lawrence omits from his literary analysis any references to the concerns which form an integral and significant part of Return of the Native. In conversation with the local rustics, Clym attempts to explain why he has forfeited a "successful" and financially secure career as a diamond merchant. "My business was the idlest, vainest, most effeminate business that ever a man could be put to." ^(RN, 175) Although Lawrence vigorously rejects the notion that extending his knowledge

and learning to the Egdon "eremites" could bring them to any valuable awareness they lack, Hardy is much gentler in his approach, suggesting that the "eremites" already possess a firmer grasp of social realities than their would-be tutor. "'Tis good-hearted of the young man... (RN,175-6)
But, for my part, I think he had better mind his business."

With the quiet irony of a practised observer of human nature Hardy comments: "To argue upon the possibility of culture before luxury to the bucolic world may be to argue truly, but it is an attempt to disturb a sequence (RN,177) to which humanity has been long accustomed." Nonetheless, Hardy can appreciate Clym's Promethean urge to bring the light of "intellectual aims" to the dark ignorance and unquestioning complacency of rural placidity. Clym's sacrifice of his career to benefit his fellow-creatures may not be a "well-proportioned", feasible action, nor designed to bring the decent and comfortable rewards of "happiness and mediocrity", yet Hardy finds it in some respects admirable, symbolically linking Clym to those outside the pale of the average and conforming - to
15
prophets, priests and kings.

Despite this "blameless" goal of enlightening Egdon inhabitants, Lawrence claims that Clym's "naturally distinct individuality" ultimately fails and brings him crashing down, "destroyed by that in himself which represents the community,

or by some close embodiment of the civic idea."^(S, 439) Clym
ends a morose, self-righteous man, a hollow mouthpiece,
preaching discourses "sometimes secular, and sometimes
religious, but never dogmatic."^(RN, 405) Gregor provides the
final summary:

Clym, who at the beginning of the novel
had provided Hardy with an opportunity for
dramatising a much more sophisticated
consciousness than he had ever attempted
before, has by the end come uncomfortably
close to simply representing his author's
dilemma about the gains and losses
inherent in evolving consciousness. 16

CHAPTER III

TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

In approaching Tess of the d'Urbervilles, critics have exhibited marked ingenuity in their analyses, and the critical battle over Hardy's intent in portraying this "pure woman" still rages. Extreme positions are adopted and dogmatically defended. Some focus on Tess the woman, the dreaming milkmaid, prey to illusions, misunderstanding and a radical self-alienation that leads to her eventual destruction. Others read Tess as the saga of the collapse of traditional rural community and the destruction of the English peasantry - the life and declining fortunes of ^{the} Durbeyfield family, and Tess in particular, are seen as symptomatic of the de-humanizing encroachment of modern industrialism and urban modes of life. Still others emphasize the "philosophy" of the novel; the bleak, pessimistic vision of life Hardy was inspired to record by his reading of Schopenhauer and his formulation of the Immanent Will. In this reading, Tess is truly resident on a "blighted star"; the Eternal Victim to Unseen Powers offered in ritual sacrifice on the Druid altar at Stonehenge.¹ More balanced critiques recognize the deep sense of interrelationship Hardy

maintains and insists on; the individual, social metaphysical, sexual and economic concerns forming part of a single process.

Hardy dramatises the public world of custom, communication and history, in juxtaposing Tess and her mother - and showing between the generations a cultural gap of centuries.

Between the mother, with her fast perishing lumber of superstitions, folklore, dialect, and orally transmitted ballads, and the daughter, with her trained National teachings and Standard knowledge under an infinitely Revised Code, there was a gap of two hundred years as ordinarily understood. When they were together the Jacobean and Victorian ages were juxtaposed. (T, 50-51)

Yet through Tess, Hardy also explores the inner dimensions of psychology and personality; an intensely "interior" and individual focus on character that traces the psychic progress of this girl who experiences a separation of mind and body, her soul "going outside her body while...still alive" (T, 158) as she gazes at the stars - a knowing of self apart from time and space. Tess is, in a sense, divided from her own people and her heritage. Jack and Joan Durbeyfield acquiesce in passive fatalism, accepting good fortune and bad with a dreaminess which is self-forgetful.² Tess begins in such dreaminess - her reverie and abstraction when driving the cart leads to the destruction of the Durbeyfields' economic livelihood and hurls her into the

arms of Alec d'Urberville. Yet through the course of her maturation and experience, Tess moves toward self-consciousness and to speculations which divide her not only from the world outside but from herself.

By her "sad imaginings" and the "ache of modernism" she intuitively feels, Tess is distinct from those "children of the open air" of Wessex, protected by their own innocence and ignorance and ironically sanctified by Hardy even in their drunken stupor by the halos, the "circle of opalized light" which "persistently beautified" their "vulgar unsteadiness" ^(T,102). "Tess is to be a true inheritor of the modern world and to receive what for Hardy is its distinctive legacy, that interior conflict which he describes as "the mutually destructive interdependence of flesh and spirit ³". And it is this Lawrence seizes on in his critique of Tess - Hardy's continuous preoccupation with human consciousness, a consciousness which has found, in the conflict with itself and with its environment, the price of its development.

Lawrence classifies Tess among those Hardy characters whose passionate natures inherently contain the seeds of their own failure and destruction. "The physical and spiritual individualist is a fine thing which must fall because of its own isolation, because it is a sport, not in the true line of life." ^(S,438) Tess faces

this isolated detachment, Lawrence argues, because of her "aristocratic" nature, her passive willingness to give, expecting nothing in return. Respecting the opinions and actions of others, she is stranded in this grasping, bourgeois democratic age, "out of her element and her times" ^(S,486). This "aristocracy" Lawrence commends bears little relation to Jack Durbeyfield's obsession with establishing and solidifying his tenuous connection to the noble d'Urberville family, but is rather a condition of self-acceptance and self-awareness.

She is of the old line, and has the aristocratic quality of respect for the other being. She does not see the other person as an extension of herself, existing in a universe of which she is the centre and pivot. She knows that other people are outside her. Therein she is an aristocrat. ^(S,482-83)

Lawrence grants Tess highest praise in that "she knows she is herself incontrovertibly" ^(S,483) and that "she respects utterly the other's right to be" ^(S,483). However, this stellar virtue in effect brings about her ultimate destruction. Her fatal flaw, her "weak life-flow", stems from this respect for others' "being", for there exists no equal to match her, no mate to recognize her individuality and to allow her independent existence. So, alienated and alone, battling those trying to change and manipulate her essential nature, Lawrence claims that Tess is "outwearied from the start, in her spirit." ^(S,486)

Hence, Tess, like Jude, is reframed by Lawrence in the Study as the drama of an overspecialized individual, victimized by the ills that arise from the cultivation of one side of existence at the expense of the other. In Lawrence's reading of the novel, in this epoch of Christian Love, Tess suppresses the strong, sensual aspect of her being, acknowledging only the "male" spirit of selfless sacrifice in herself. She needs the physical "female" complement in a man to right the balance in her psyche. But Alec, like Arabella, is too strongly "female" - the sensual Law in him⁴ ^{has} ousted the Christian "male" sense of otherness. D'Urberville denies her "right to be" in his persistent and concerted attempts to possess Tess utterly. In his refusal to recognize the spiritual part of Tess's nature, Alec cannot allow her independent existence apart from him. He can see her only as the "embodied fulfillment of his own desire" ^(S, 483).

Having "killed the male" in himself, Alec is prevented from transforming the "motive power" he receives from Tess into any creative expression or development. He has no external purpose, no place to channel the strength garnered from Tess. Like Arabella, he is arrested in the senses, parasitically feeding off Tess as a means of self-gratification. He plunders her world and essence with cavalier heedlessness⁵ because he is spiritually impotent. So Tess's necessary

consummation, "the singling out of herself ", is not forthcoming from Alec. He touches the sensual part of her being only to betray it. As Lawrence rewrites Alec's murder, it is this betrayal, this shattering of Tess, that finally spurs her to such desperate and violent action. Lawrence appears, in effect, to ignore all Hardy's painstaking efforts to indicate that this action operates on several levels: as the inevitable fatal fulfillment of the d'Urberville curse; as the lashing-out (foreshadowed in the scene where Tess hurls her glove in Alec's face) of a Tess with her back against the wall, unable to withstand Alec's goading about Angel; as the symbolic action of the now psychologically-split Tess, who requires this ritualistic blood-letting to purge herself of past sordid connections and thus, to be free to offer herself to her "pristine" Angel as a pure woman. Lawrence, by his very omissions, implies that all these factors are extraneous to the essential motive - the betrayal of being. "The book is botched, owing to the way of thinking in the author, owing to the weak yet obstinate theory of being." (S, 484)

Yet Lawrence detects an "aristocratic kinship" in Alec - a potential for exceptional existence, with "the good stuff gone wrong ". As he later claims in a similar fashion of Arabella, "No ordinary man could really have

betrayed Tess...For Alec d'Urberville could reach some of the real sources of the female in a woman, and draw from them." (S,484) Alec makes contact, comes close to Tess, reaches her in a way Angel Clare never could have:

She would have lived with her husband, Clare, in a state of abandon to him, like a coma. Alec d'Urberville forced her to realize him, and to realize herself. (S,486)

Lawrence presents a picture of Alec as an individual with an irresistible sense of power, who gives to Tess a sense of her own power and attraction, despite the fact he cannot "fulfill" her totality. Lawrence's reading does clarify the ambivalence surrounding the crucial night in the Chase, for it must be read as both seduction and rape; Alec both creator and destroyer. If it were merely a rape, there would be no sense in Tess's profound feeling that her whole being has been invaded by Alec. She does belong to him if only because he brought her to consciousness of her own sexuality. - Yet their coupling is more than a seduction, it must also be a violation, or Tess could not later come to feel that her past with Alec is a nullity to her as a woman. ⁶ Rewriting and refocusing Hardy's characterization, Lawrence "saves" Alec from Hardy's telling.

For though Hardy consciously made the young betrayer a plebeian and an impostor, unconsciously, with the supreme justice

of the artist, he made him...a true aristocrat. (S, 486)

The logic of Lawrence's argument, though persuasive, ignores the implied social criticism Hardy levels through the character of Alec d'Urberville. Hardy does deal with the declining fortunes of the English peasantry, as the agricultural and urban modes of life come increasingly into clashing contact. As the nineteenth-century wound down towards its conclusion, the predicament of the agricultural community and families like ^{the} Durbeyfields, trying to maintain their precarious hold on the rural ways of life, became increasingly more difficult. The urban bourgeoisie, nouveau riche like the Stoke - d'Urbervilles - better educated, superior in wealth and status, yet inferior in human worth - make disastrous yet inevitable inroads on the age-old Wessex world. Jack Durbeyfield's shiftless work habits and obsession with his noble origins, and his wife's belief that their lifeline to a brighter economic future lies through their pretty daughter's ability to snare a rich husband, push the hapless Tess into Alec's arms. Racked by her own guilt over Prince's death and the collapse of her family's sole means of support, Tess agrees to go and work at The Slopes, thus making herself unavoidably vulnerable and dependent on the unscrupulous Alec. Her rape-seduction signifies the insidious

encroachment of urban modes of existence - a conquering as well as a merging between the two ways of life.⁸

In addition, when Lawrence elevates Alec to the status of misunderstood aristocrat, he ignores that aspect of Victorian melodrama which colours much of our opinion of Alec's character. Introduced to an Alec hidden behind the veiling "blue narcotic haze"^(T, 71) of his cigar smoke, his characterization recalls that of the stock stage villain - complete with the "well-groomed black moustache with curled points", "bold rolling eye"^(T, 68), cane and town suits of the seducing cad, plunderer of the countryside. Like Sergeant Troy before him, Alec displays a certain theatrical flair and adopts many roles - fashionable urban rake, black-clothed evangelist, country laborer - appearing ever unexpectedly, catching Tess out everywhere like "a ghastly bizarrerie, a grim incongruity"^(T, 352). As he pursues the defenceless Tess to Marlott, he suddenly confronts her dressed in the old-fashioned smock of the country man. Yet he attains the symbolic stature of Satan; the smoky fire-light throws into sharp relief the steel prongs of his fork. He mocks their situation explicitly in these terms: "A jester might say this is just like paradise. You are Eve, and I am the old Other One come to tempt you in the guise of an inferior animal."^(T, 397) Lawrence is right in arguing that Alec transcends this stereotyped portrait of

philanderer-imposter to assume a compelling power. This seems particularly evident in his candid, emotional confession of the power of Tess's bewitching presence in his life:

"Tess, my girl, I was on the way to, at least, social salvation till I saw you again!...And why then have you tempted me? I was firm as a man could be till I saw those eyes and that mouth - surely there was never such a maddening mouth since Eve's!...You temptress, Tess; you dear damned witch of Babylon - I could not resist you as soon as I met you again! (T, 370)

However, it seems excessive to dismiss so offhandedly as a case of Hardy's "bad art" the melodramatic side of Alec's characterization. Hardy's vision is apparently dual (as it was in Return of the Native). Alec is both Tess's physically "aristocratic" mate and the persistent, smooth and unscrupulous seducer, harrying the unprotected girl.⁹

Angel Clare, like Alec, is also a fragmentary being, fatally hindered by a "deadlock in his own being".^(S, 484) He provides an extreme example of the predominance of the "male" principle - the male equivalent of the tortured Sue Bridehead. Sensually impotent, his body drives him to Tess, but he can only know her body through her mind and spirit - a blight, granted Lawrence's perspective. His distorted idea of the female principle identifies Clare as a typical product of his age and historical cycle, the

zenith of the ascetic repressive Christian tradition.

It is the result of generations of ultra-Christian training, which had left in him an inherent aversion to the female, and to all in himself which pertained to the female. (S,485)

Lawrence writes in the essay, "Democracy": "If we want to find the real enemy today, here it is: idealism...What is the idea, or the ideal, after all? It is only a fixed, static entity, an abstraction, an extraction from the living body of life." Hardy's Angel, a man of "advanced ideas" and "conventional behavior", dramatizes this splintered consciousness in his insistent adherence to the "ideal". The farm workers of Talbothays become, in his transforming vision, creations of a Rousseau-type fancy. He finds in the milkmaid, Tess, an abstraction - (T,170) "the whole sex condensed in one typical form". He does not know Tess as an actual woman, loving only the ideal image he has formed of her, remote and distant. This "visionary essence of woman" appears in the "mixed, singular, luminous gloom" of early morning at Talbothays "merely a soul at large". Yet as he fancifully calls Tess "Artemis" (T,170) and "Demeter", Angel glosses over the inherent contradictions even his choice of myths reflects - Artemis, the chaste, cold goddess of the moon and Demeter, the earthly, fecund goddess of crops and fertility.

There is a deep irony in Angel's compulsive desire to ignore the reality of Tess. This kind of blank, self-deceiving resistance to substituting the real person for the ideal abstraction proves emotionally destructive to Tess. All her attempts to confess her past experiences are sloughed off by Angel. "My Tess has, no doubt, almost as many experiences as that wild convolvulus out there on the garden hedge, that opened itself this morning for the first time."^(T,218) In her agitated and overwrought state, Tess, like Bathsheba and Eustacia before her, projects her psychological state onto what becomes a grotesque, surrealistic landscape in the midst of Edenic Talbothays.

...and a monstrous pumpkin-like moon arose on the other hand. The pollard willows, tortured out of their natural shape by incessant choppings, became spiny-haired monsters as they stood up against it.^(T,219)

Tess lives under the pressure of Angel's refusal to see her for what she is - a flesh-and-blood woman. This, as well as the grinding, ever-present presence of her past coupled with her own sexual unease, leads Tess to impose her psychic disturbance on this symbolic setting.

Confronted by Tess's confession after their marriage, Clare cannot mask his ascetic revulsion; cannot "put off his own divinity, his pure maleness, his singleness, his pure completeness, and descend to the heated welter of the flesh"^(S,484). Ignoring Tess's obvious pain

and suffering, the "gentle and affectionate" Angel reveals a hidden immovable core - "a hard logical deposit, like a vein of metal in a soft loam, which turned the edge of everything that attempted to traverse it" ^(T,284). His illusions shattered, he becomes pure mental consciousness and strong will, dead to the love and passion that the real Tess offers and that his cardboard cut-out of the "pure, spiritual" Tess, his "new-sprung child of nature" ^(T,275), never could have. Hardy expands on this tendency, for Angel's "ethereal" love, "imaginative to impracticability", operates better in the absence of the real woman: "Corporeal presence is sometimes less appealing than corporeal absence; the latter creating an ideal presence that conveniently drops the defects of the real." ^(T,287) Hardy enters as omniscient narrator at this crucial point with an odd disclaimer: "Some might risk the odd paradox that with more animalism he would have been the nobler man. We do not say it." ^[emphasis mine-T,287] This comment could be directed to the Victorian public, leaving the options open by the fact of raising them. The problem comes with the abstracting, distancing effect of the word used. Lawrence wrote that Hardy himself is "something of an Angel Clare", in his unwillingness to contemplate what in terms of particular human relationships "animalism" is to mean. The theorizing nature of the word exposes the self-consciousness Lawrence

12

hated.

What Lawrence makes of wholeness in a human being is, of course, different and distinct from what Hardy envisions. Lawrence seizes on an essential theme that Hardy had already toyed with in his characterization of Clym - that "thought is a disease of the flesh ". Having severed any connection with Tess's potential for revitalizing, fruitful passion, Angel succumbs to mental paralysis. "His thought had been unsuspended; he was becoming ill with thinking; eaten out with thinking, withered by thinking." (T,285) Although the burning sun and the isolation of Brazil inspire Clare to reflect and reconsider the terrible disservice he has done Tess and the vulnerable position he has placed her in, he remains to the end a sickly remnant of a man. "For Angel Clare, though apparently alive, is in reality no more than a monk, a piece of paper, like Clym left preaching." (S,489)

Characterizing Alec together with Sergeant Troy as "good stuff gone wrong ", Lawrence terms Angel "good stuff gone wrong in the other direction". (S,487) And in this lies the tragedy of the novel, in Lawrence's interpretation. Tess's own integrity of life and being, her aristocratic self-acceptance, ultimately fractures under the impact of the two principles of Law and Love. Both Alec and Angel, overbalanced in different directions, shatter her essential being. Following this formulation, Lawrence documents the

inevitable results:

The one extreme produces the other. It is inevitable for Angel Clare and for Alec d'Urberville mutually to destroy the woman they both loved. Each does her the extreme of wrong, so she is destroyed. (S,488)

Tess does come to dissociate totally flesh and spirit, in an unconditional split between her drifting exploited body and her living will. Angel dimly recognizes this:

...his original Tess had spiritually ceased to recognize the body before him as hers - allowing it to drift, like a corpse upon the current, in a direction dissociated from its living will. (T,429)

Caught between the two extremes, Tess loses her tenuous grip on an already fragmented consciousness and on the precarious image she had managed to retain of herself.

Lawrence quarrels with Hardy's apparent introduction of "mechanical fate" which dictates Tess's destruction by "communal law ". The tragedy for Lawrence is not Tess's death on the gallows at Wintoncester, but her acceptance of guilt and condemnation despite her naturalness and innocence -

Tess allowed herself to be condemned... Why? She had done nothing particularly, or at least irrevocably, unnatural, were her life young and strong. But she sided with the community's condemnation of her. (S,440)

Lawrence views the problem of Hardy's novel, "handled with

(S,488)
 very uncertain skill, botched and bungled ", as yet another
 instance of Hardy's refusal to transcend conventional
 morality. But Lawrence will overlook the "flaws" in
 Hardy's presentation to pay his tribute to Hardy's genius,
 granting that "the whole book is true, in its conception ",
 (S,484)
 (S,488)
 containing "elements of the greatest tragedy".

As always, Lawrence's insistence on viewing the
 novel as a network of personal relationships, a psycho-
 drama in which Tess, Alec and Angel play out their
 respective roles in the quest for individual self-fulfillment,
 leaves out the strident religious and social polemic that
 Hardy as embattled social critic wished to convey.
 Increasingly in his writing career Hardy tended to see
 an opposition between the spontaneity of nature and the
 legal rigidities of social institutions and conventions. 13
 The premonitions of social criticism latent in the earlier
 "pastoral" works (Under the Greenwood Tree and Far From
the Madding Crowd particularly), become increasingly
 apparent in Return of the Native, and by the time of Tess
 and Jude, virulent criticisms of society are explicitly
 and emphatically aired. Tess's premarital sexual experience,
 which invites Hardy's biting criticism of the role of
 woman as "sexual property ", was prefigured in the pathetic
 Fanny Robin. Like Fanny, Tess as "fallen woman" is
 hounded from pillar to post, branded and finally destroyed.

Symbolically linked to the covey of wounded and maimed pheasants she discovers in the woods, by the time she reaches Stonehenge, Tess is herself a trapped animal, offered up in ritualistic sacrifice - a natural creature hunted down by social forces.

Hardy probes the question of true purity. He emphasizes Tess's obvious integrity; she instinctively tries to maintain a truly "moral" stance, to remain true to her own nature and to her conception of herself. Tess valiantly attempts to hold out against Alec's offers to "keep" her or to make her his wife. Against this, Hardy sets the Victorian travesty of sexual purity, where as long as things were cloaked in^a veil of legal respectability no amount of self-compromise was too dear. Moving on from this, Hardy explores the theme of marriage-tyranny, a device of story pathos in the earlier novels. In Far From the Madding Crowd, Bathsheba's impulsive marriage to Troy is fortuitously terminated by his timely death, making clear the way for the eminently suitable liaison with her ever-faithful suitor, Gabriel. If skepticism about marriage as a legal institution is touched on in Return of the Native (particularly in the Thomasin-Wildeve relationship), Hardy's caustic views are open and apparent in Tess and Jude. In Tess, Hardy approaches questions of

marriage and family with a new intensity achieved through a sharper, more sustained insight into the inner light of character. Some difficulties crop up, however, with Hardy's vision of Angel's future. At Stonehenge, Tess exhorts Angel to marry and care for Liza-Lu, the "spiritualized vision" of herself, but she seems a mere walk-on character designed to cushion the bleak pessimism of the novel. Hardy has exposed the inadequacies of Angel's conceptions of relationships and marriage. So to have Angel discover the error of his ways and return, only to be indulged with an appropriate "spirit girl" in Tess's image, seems to blunt the point Hardy has been making throughout the novel.

Lawrence also fails to deal with the ways in which the hypocrisy and inadequacy of conventional Christianity are laid open for inspection by Hardy's ironic vision. In one of the novel's most moving scenes, Tess suffers the tortures of the damned while imagining her child "consigned to the nethermost corner of hell, as its double doom for lack of baptism and lack of legitimacy" ^(T, 129). As she baptizes the infant Sorrow, Hardy clearly indicates where his sympathies lie, and in effect implies that this improvised sacrament may prove more genuine than its orthodox counterpart. (In much the same way Hardy later suggests that Jude's haphazard, catch-as-can scholarship may be

truer to the ideal spirit of learning than that of the Christminster "block-head" undergraduates.) Scarcely more than a child herself, Tess fulfills the "true" spirit of faith and reverence for life in a way that society's condemning rigidities cannot comprehend. Denied a Christian burial, the innocent Sorrow's coffin is relegated to "that shabby corner of God's allotment where He lets the nettles grow and where all unbaptized infants, notorious drunkards, suicides, and others of the conjecturally damned are laid" (T, 133).

Tess also derives much of its power as a novel from the imaginative testimony Hardy gives to the gradual destruction of a stable agricultural community by the encroaching nineteenth-century industrialism. Through the intricate web of confrontation Hardy weaves about Alec and Tess, he symbolically juxtaposes the social energy of the parvenu and the spent forces of ancient rural families. Hardy himself was personally very conscious of this trend, as his diary entry of 30 September, 1888 indicates:

'The decline and fall of the Hardys much in evidence hereabout. An instance: Becky S.'s mother's sister married one of the Hardys of this branch, who was considered to have demeaned himself by the marriage. "All Woolcombe and Froom Quintin belonged to them at one time," Becky used to say proudly. She might

have added Up-Sydling and Toller Welme. This particular couple had an enormous lot of children. I remember when young seeing the man - tall and thin - walking beside a horse and springtrap, and my mother pointing him out to me and saying he represented what was once the leading branch of the family. So we go down, down, down.' 14

Alec, of the newly-rich Stokes family, represents nineteenth-century laissez-faire capitalism at its most rapacious.

Subscribing whole-heartedly to the individual bourgeois ethic, he arrogantly assumes throughout the novel that what is wanted can be bought.¹⁵ This attitude extends even to Tess, although the ticket here is not the pretty clothes and ornaments he initially dangles before her, but the promise of financial security for her penniless, fatherless brood of brothers and sisters.

An agricultural and economic crisis has obviously overtaken the old Wessex, turning Durbeyfields and others like them into migrant labour. Hardy documents the disintegration of a way of life:

These annual migrations from farm to farm were on the increase here. When Tess's mother was a child the majority of field-folk about Marlott had remained all their lives on one farm, which had been the home also of their fathers and grandfathers; but latterly the desire for yearly removal had risen to a high pitch. (T, 400)

This increased transience and a shortage of cottage accommodation forced a flow of homeless families into cities. Within this context of general flux and disintegration

of old village hierarchies and securities, Tess's plight as she and her family are expelled from their home takes on an added significance which Lawrencean criticism fails to register. As migratory carts crowd the lanes on Lady-Day, we feel the convulsions of the Wessex world. Gregor captures the feeling:

The wider world is now forcing itself upon Tess, and the last phases are to be dominated not by the individual consciousness and its correlative, landscape, but by money, changing methods of work, migration of families, a "fashionable watering place," and the law. Social institutions, economic processes, these are to give a fresh definition to Tess's consciousness, and in its turn, that consciousness is to put such processes under judgement. 16

Brought down to swede-grubbing in the desolate landscape of Flintcomb Ash, Tess loses her individuality, becoming virtually an automaton, specially programmed for the mindless, back-breaking labour. Her defeat and enslavement seem total and complete as she mechanically serves the "red tyrant", the threshing machine. Divorced totally from the elemental rhythms of nature which govern the agricultural world, the machine dominates Wessex, while yet remaining apart from it. Yet this dehumanizing process conquers only Tess's body, not her person; just as Alec can, by exploiting the fatal division in her own consciousness, possess her physically, but not emotionally.

In his reading of the novel, Lawrence also passes over any reference to an external fate or contrivance, typing all such "tricks" Hardy's major defect as an artist - his submission of his "art" to his conscious metaphysic. Yet we identify with Tess's tortured cry, "Once a victim, always a victim", and feel in some respects at least that she, like Jude Fawley, has no chance - that some jealous power in the universe is hostile to human sensitivity and happiness. Inhabiting this "blighted star", the naïve Tess "was doomed to be seen and coveted by the wrong man" ^(T,72). Hardy ironically notes the virtual impossibility of any meaningful coming together in the type of transcendent consummation Lawrence so desired - "in the ill-judged execution of the well-judged plan of things the call seldom produces the comer, ^(T,72) the man to love rarely coincides with the hour for loving." Tess's difficulties, disasters, degradation and death offer an unanswerable challenge to the breezy, optimistic ^(T,51) Wordsworthian assumption of "Nature's holy plan".

Hardy shows acute concern for the "chronic melancholy which is taking hold of the civilized races with the decline of belief in a beneficent Power" ^(T,156). In modern society, with belief shattered in a divine being pervading and sustaining all creation, it becomes increasingly difficult to laugh at pain and death, or to be at all sure if life

has coherence and meaning. Despite overwhelming evidence, setback after setback, trial piled upon trial, happiness dangled before Tess's face only to be snatched immediately away, Lawrence absolutely ignores any suggestion of an external capricious fate, the "hap" of haphazard circumstance, the President of the Immortals finishing his sport with Tess. Like the strange birds at Flintcomb Ash, these "gaunt spectral figures with tragical eyes - eyes which had witnessed scenes of cataclysmal horror in inaccessible polar regions,"^(T, 334) there is an element of hyperbole, of the grotesque, in Hardy's vision that Lawrence does not deal with. The ethos of universal guilt and plundering in Tess becomes, in Lawrence's sympathetic ordering of thought, merely the ills that arise from imbalance in being - the cultivation of one side of existence at the expense of the other.

CHAPTER IV

JUDE THE OBSCURE

Jude appears to be the Hardy novel closest to Lawrence's heart, and certainly it bears the most substantial parallels and affinities to Lawrence's own fictional efforts. Even more than Tess, it is largely preoccupied with coming to "awareness" and the definition of self. In Jude, Hardy comes closest to the "modern" novel, the transitions and developments from the earlier "Wessex" novels markedly evident. Until this final novel, and even to an extent in Tess, where there is conflict in Hardy's world, it is conflict with a way of life, a social attitude, a cast of mind. In Jude, the conflict becomes intensely interior, one temperament with another, "so that place becomes a matter of little significance. The essential landscape is of heart and nerves." ¹ In Jude we find, carried to the furthest extreme, conflicts which have been gaining in definition and momentum as the Hardy novels have continued: the self-estrangement of the individual, the clash with social institutions, and emerging from this clash, an increasingly sharp sense of the needs of the present time. ²

It is a tribute to the complexity Hardy brings to his depiction of a "modern" consciousness that Lawrence has some difficulty in pigeon-holing the elusive Jude. Lawrence "slots" Jude differently in three consecutive paragraphs of the Study, viewing him first as ^{of the} one "passionate aristocratic males...doomed by their very being", in the tradition of Troy and Alec. Next, Lawrence shifts ground slightly to place the onus on the historical sweep of things, granting that "perhaps", as an aristocratic male who fell before the "average", Jude yet might have succeeded in more heroic times. Finally, appearing to want a foot in all doors, Lawrence allows that "perhaps a little of Jude" appears in the bourgeois or average hero like Gabriel Oak, "whose purpose is to live and have^{his} being in the community." (S, 438) Jude's complexity defies neat categorization, even in Lawrence's terms.

Lawrence's critique of Jude in many ways stands as the mirror image of his analysis of Tess: "Jude is only Tess turned ^{round} about." (S, 488) Lawrence views Jude, in effect, as a young Paul Morel, a man craving fulfillment, awakening in the blood and spirit, who cannot find a woman with both elements in equal measure. Jude's tragedy lies in his confusion of the principles of Law and Love, flesh and spirit. He is racked by self-division: "monkish, passionate, medieval, belonging to woman yet striving away from her." (S, 494)

Lawrence attacks what he terms Hardy's "falsity of consciousness", arguing that Jude's passion for study and yearning for Christminster are misdirected. Following this interpretive line, Hardy is wrong in attempting to weave his tragedy around the disappointment of this conscious social ambition, the poor, obscure outsider barred from the world of education and its accompanying social privileges. According to Lawrence, Jude's true goal is not to achieve some petty trophy, not "the vanity of education, a sort of superiority of educational wealth", but "through familiarity with ^{the} true thinkers and poets...to find ^{conscious} expression for that which he held in his blood" (S, 499-500) - a movement toward articulation and awaking awareness. Jude's true education, as Lawrence sees it, comes not through the mastering of "the Fathers...Bede and ecclesiastical history generally; a smattering of Hebrew" (J, 57) but through Arabella and Sue. The two women form archetypal contrasts - Arabella all Flesh and Law, Sue all Spirit and Love - yet both share a marked indifference to Jude's struggle for formal education. Arabella sees it as a distracting pastime, believing she had gained a husband "with a lot of earning power in him for buying her frocks and hats when he should begin to get frightened a bit, and stick to his trade, and throw aside those stupid books for

(J,79)
 practical undertakings". Sue merely believes his plans to be a misguided waste of effort, a yearning after false gods, since "the intellect at Christminster is new wine in old bottles" of medievalism and Christminster itself (J,171) "a place full of fetichists and ghost-seers ". Both women eventually demand Jude's full allegiance, and Arabella in particular jealously resents the obstructing "impingement" of Christminster.

Returning again to his belief that Hardy cherishes a predilection for the "male" or spiritual side of being and a prejudice against the "female" principle, Lawrence claims that Hardy loads the dice by failing to grant the Flesh its proper due. Where Sue is too weak, has let the "female" atrophy within her, Arabella's total commitment to the body is too coarse and overriding. However, because all this seems evident to Lawrence in the novel, he feels justified in correcting Hardy's art to show what he "really" meant. Lawrence undertakes to "rewrite" Arabella as the heroine of the piece, a necessary counterpart to Jude as she leads him to the right course of Lawrencean blood-consciousness. Despite her spiritual impotence and scorn for Jude's idealistic aspirations, Lawrence sees in Arabella a fit match for Jude, a woman who baptizeshim into physical consummation.

No ordinary woman could have laid her hands on Jude...A coarse, shallow woman does not want to marry a sensitive, deep-feeling man. She feels no desire for him, she is not drawn to him, but repelled, knowing he will condemn her. (S, 489)

In her arms Jude["] is proven unto himself as a male being, (S, 493) initiated into the freedom of life" in much the same way, Lawrence contends, that Alec raised Tess to an awareness of her own sexuality and intrinsic "femaleness ". Again like Alec, Arabella is "non-developing ", with a selfish instinct for love and sensual gratification that fails to progress.

She had the will to remain where she was, static, and to receive and exhaust all impulse she received from the male in her senses. Whereas in a normal woman, impulse received from the male drives her on to a sense of joy and wonder and glad freedom in touch with the unknown of which she is made aware, so that she exists on the edge of the unknown half in rapture. (S, 493)

Despite this imbalance and inadequacy, this overwhelming,

"reckless and unconstrained femaleness ", Lawrence puts forward the case that Arabella rescues Jude from becoming an Angel Clare, adhering to his ideal of learning till he had stultified the physical impulse of his being and perverted it entirely. "She gave him to himself." (S, 494)

Lawrence's valiant attempts to elevate Arabella blatantly ignore Hardy's characterization. He baldly states that Hardy's insistence on Arabella's cunning, deceit

(the false dimples and tail of hair are but two examples), and on the wily entrapment of Jude through the ruse of false pregnancy "is not the point at all. This is only
(S,489)
Hardy's bad art." Lawrence asserts that "Arabella was,

under all her disguise of pig-fat, false hair and vulgar
speech, in character somewhat an aristocrat."
(S,490)

Dismissing all evidence of her violence and vulgarity (in particular, the sordid spectacle of the pig-killing and her first introduction to Jude when she hurls a pig's pizzle in his face at the height of his day-dreaming fantasies of Christminster), Lawrence plays on the note of sexual vitality and spontaneity he sees in Arabella. Lawrence tries to transform her into a figure like Clara Dawes, into the woman who "makes a man of Jude ". She is to be the archetypal sensual female, "strong and abundant,
(S,490)
arrogant in her hold on life ", unburdened by oppressive spirituality. Yet where Lawrence's Clara is a carefully

rounded, finely-shaded portrait drawn with visual intensity in images of fleshy Rubenesque heaviness designed to inspire our sympathy, Hardy's Arabella remains a somewhat flat character, sketched from a distance and with a boldness that approximates caricature. Even Lawrence's persuasive and impassioned rhetoric cannot change the sow's ear into the silken purse, the pig-killer's daughter into an aristocrat of any sort.

Lawrence makes much of Arabella's instrumentality in bringing Jude to a knowledge of his physical "maleness": "Really, he had lost nothing by his marriage with Arabella: neither innocence nor belief nor hope. He had indeed gained his manhood. She left him ^{the} stronger and completer." (S,495) This vision of a "stronger and completer" Jude, however, bears singularly little relation to the man of shattered illusions Hardy depicts. Lawrence fails to deal with the Jude compelled to attempt suicide by his despair and disillusionment over his marriage, then driven to escape his depression through drunkenness.

Arguing the same tack he applied to Alec d'Urberville, Lawrence ultimately asks simply that "acknowledgement be made to her great female force of character." (S,494) In this Lawrence comes closer to the text, for Hardy does artistic justice to Arabella against the grain of his tastes. There is at least a crude, candid authenticity about her desire for Jude - "I must have him. I can't do without him. He's the sort of man I long ^(J,69) for." Even set against Jude's intense sensitivity, Arabella's commonsense, hard-nosed realism and brutal pragmatism make a valid and necessary case for survival - "pigs must be killed...poor folks must live." (J,85-86) Hardy leaves little doubt, however, as to where our sympathies as readers should fall, when he describes the "dismal, sordid, ugly spectacle" of pig-

killing, which captures in a vignette the entire drama of Jude's marriage to Arabella. The grossness of their incompatibility is never in doubt. For Hardy, the marriage can only be seen as a tragic farce, spattered with pig's blood, squalor and the destruction of Jude's youthful ideals.

In Lawrence's analysis, Jude, with his sensual manhood gained through Arabella, must move on to Sue for his spiritual and mental awakening. "Spiritual" marriage with Sue helps Jude "to overcome the female sensuousness in himself, to transmute his sensuous being into another state, a state of clarity, of consciousness." ^(S,500) Lawrence can see, in its time and place, the benefit to Jude of Sue's forward-looking critical mind, in as much as she makes him aware of inconsistencies and divisions within himself. Sue as the skeptical voice of the present age exposes Christminster's social exclusiveness and attachment to outworn creeds. Wary of the dead hand of the past, she is sensitive and open to change - theatrically declaring at one point that she would rather sit in a railway station than the Cathedral: "That's the centre of town life now. ^(J,153) The Cathedral has had its day." Yet this vaunted freedom of thought, an unequivocal vantage point from which to criticize Jude's dream and the institutions which thwart it, also masks an inability to make any real commitment -

a nervous self-enclosure against the invasions of experience.

Lawrence probes this aspect of Sue, and determines that she suffers more acutely from "Christianizing" than Jude or the earlier Angel Clare. Sue's spiritual restlessness resists any fixity; "the social moulds civilization fits us into have no more relation to our actual shapes than the conventional shapes of the constellations have to the real star patterns." (J,226) As her name "Bridehead" implies, Sue is untouched - all intellect and nerves, sensitive and essentially bodiless. Associated with spirits, Sue appears to Jude at Aldbrickham as a "vision", "a phantasmal, bodiless creature" (J,279); when she is visiting Phillotson during his illness "her advent seemed ghostly, like the flitting in of a moth" (J,269). Her spiritual purity, sharp intellect and sensitivity preserve her for Jude as an object of ideal yearning, hopeless and debilitating. She embodies the quintessence of his innocence in an ideal state before his Christminster ambitions were destroyed by Arabella. For Lawrence, Sue's being is so purified into the predominantly "male" woman that "the vital female atrophied within her." (S,496)

Lawrence qualifies Hardy's suggestion of pagan affinity, clearly dramatized when she buys the plaster statuettes of the Greek divinities, wraps them in leaves, and carries her "heathen load into the most Christian

(J,114)
 city in the country." The suppressed spirit of Hardy's Sue is for Lawrence not pagan in its rebellion; on the contrary, she expresses the striving of "male" Love, the Christian impulse to individualization and mind:

She turned to look at Venus and Apollo.
 As if she could know either Venus or
 Apollo, save as ideas. Nor Venus nor
 Aphrodite had anything to do with her,
 but only Pallas and Christ. (S,501)

Lawrence argues that the epoch which produced the over-specialized, "bodiless" art of Turner's last phase also produced Sue and her predicament. "What Cassandra and Aspasia became to the Greeks, Sue has become to ^{the} northern civilization." (S,496) Picking up on Jude's comment that Sue resembles "one of the women of some grand old civilization, whom I used to read about in my bygone, wasted, classical days, rather than a denizen of a mere Christian country", (J,290) Lawrence rejects Hardy's suggestion that Sue is a frustrated figure of Greek-like innocence. This perception seems the more plausible when considered in light of the novel's conclusion. For Sue's classical veneer and mental emancipation from traditional dogma and creed do prove frail and inadequate. She renounces Jude and returns to Phillotson to do eternal penance to the wrathful Old Testament Jehovah for the "sin" of loving Jude.

Lawrence maintains that Sue must know the body through her mind as its food, its stimulus. She needs

slight physical contact to give her life, yet dare not give herself to any deep sexual relationship if she is to keep intact her "form" and stellar purity. So Lawrence believes that Sue remains true to her rarefied being in her fatal liaison with the London student, her first marriage to Phillotson and her "spiritual" marriage with Jude. Sue manipulates Jude as a spiritual instrument, where Arabella made of him a sexual conquest. In dramatic fashion, Lawrence acutely captures the sense of Sue's parasitic drain on Jude's vital "maleness" - "this continuous state of incandescence of the consciousness, when his body, his vital tissues, the very protoplasm in him, was being slowly consumed away."^(S,507) Lawrence locates the centre of tragedy in Sue's physical union with Jude, a union precipitated by Arabella's appearance at Aldbrickham. When Arabella disturbs Jude's patient celibacy and self-control in this "tantalizing position"^(J,285), Sue can be clearly seen

disguising her revulsion from the sexual under cover of⁴ the abstract dislike of the social tie of marriage. Yet she gives in, and the union is physically consummated. For this, Jude later reproaches himself - "You were a distinct type - a refined creature intended by Nature to be left intact. But I couldn't leave you alone!"^(J,363) Yet Hardy, in a letter written after Jude's publication in 1895, offers an explanation that, in effect, counters

Lawrence's thesis. He stresses Sue's inability to commit herself fully to the physical consummation of marriage with Jude as the root of the tragic situation:

Though she (Sue) had children, her intimacies with Jude have never been more than occasional, even when they were living together...This has tended to keep his passion as hot at the end as it was at the beginning, and helps to break his heart. He has never possessed her as freely as he desired. 5

But where Hardy stresses the insufficiency and incompleteness of Jude's and Sue's union, Lawrence passionately argues the total unsuitability of their coupling. As "one of the supremest products of our civilization" (S, 497), Sue's special "form", that of a creature of Love, is violated when she gives her body to Jude. This confusion, this attempt to marry spirit and flesh when any total marriage for Jude and Sue is impossible, comes about, according to Lawrence, though Sue's unsure conviction of her "special nature." Hence, in Lawrence's critique, Sue is wrongly jealous of Arabella (although as Sue says, "love has its own dark morality when rivalry enters") (J, 286). The suppressed "female" in Sue urges her to prove her existence as a physical woman, just as Jude follows his mental will into a physical consummation he does not want from Sue. Lawrence dogmatically holds to this position, arguing in the imperative and compelling "must have" construction, extrapolating from the book a part of the novel Hardy has not written.

He (Jude) must have felt the devastating sense of the unlivingness of life, things must have ceased to exist for him, when he rose from taking Sue, and he must have felt that he walked in a ghastly blank, confronted just by space, void. (S,505)
(emphasis mine)

Their coupling is a "profanation...[a] pollution" to Lawrence because of "their incapacity to accept the conditions of (S,505) their own and each other's being ". However, with genuine intuition, Lawrence underlines the fact that the vital connection between Sue and Jude is one of sensibility, not sense. The only "real" marriage Jude shares with Sue is bodiless, occasioned by the scent and brilliance of the roses at the agricultural show.

At times Lawrence's exclusive emphasis on personal relationships makes for distortions that border on the grotesque. Despite Lawrence's arguments to the contrary, it is a cruel and rigid social order that ultimately triumphs in Jude, and throttles natural instinct. Sex, according to convention, is seen as shameful, a yielding to one's "bestial" nature. This same convention maintains the conviction that a woman must be "housed" under a man's domination and that a working man must be kept in his place and not allowed to aspire to higher education. From the vantage point of his "inner" psychological concerns, Lawrence judges Jude and Sue to be exclusively victims of their own emotional being (carrying through consistently

the interpretation he applied to Clym, Eustacia, Tess, Alec and Angel), thus passing over again Hardy's bitter social commentary. In the Jude that Hardy wrote, it is manifestly clear that if Jude and Sue are, to some extent, victims of each other, they are also trapped and maimed by the society they live in. While exposing the impossibility of combining spirit and flesh in a harmonious whole, Hardy stresses the intolerance and stupidity of society.

Throughout Jude Hardy shows us scene after scene in which the unconscious instinctual part of the individual must battle society's rigid, man-made laws, arbitrary taboos and restrictions, only to lose. Had Lawrence written the novel (as, in a sense, he does in The Rainbow), sexual relationships would form the heart of the book. But Hardy's main love relationship divorces itself from the physical as much as possible. Sue is consistently depicted as ethereal and bodiless, and Jude is cleared of the charge of gross animalism by the long suppression of his physical nature for the sake of companionship with Sue. Therefore, since the two were hunted as social pariahs even while their relationship remained on this incandescent Shelleyan plane, the lack of community sympathy or understanding seems the more inexcusable. In Hardy's stern universe, any attempt to

rise above petty social ambition to attain passionate, individualistic existence is doomed to certain defeat. If these individuals succeed in scaling the impregnable wall of social convention and respectability, isolation, persecution and exposure await. They either succumb to the punitive wrath of the community (like Tess) or eventually bow beneath the burden of ostracism, exclusion, suffering and humiliation (like Eustacia, Sue and Jude).

Lawrence disregards this scathing exposé of society's brutal intolerance. He passes over Hardy's painstaking efforts to show the tremendous external pressures placed on Jude's and Sue's relationship. He glosses over such "irrelevant details" as the social stigma which ostracizes the hunted pair, who are symbolically linked to helpless birds seeking the safety of the nest they are never allowed. Society also dictates that Jude forfeit the job of lettering the Ten Commandments in the Cathedral due to the couple's "illicit" status and Sue's "shameful" pregnancy. Here no one steps forward to soften the community's condemnation; Hardy denies Sue and Jude even the meagre comfort Tess draws from the rustics' casual acceptance of her illegitimate child. Lawrence blithely sees society's damning judgement as a direct reflection of Jude's and Sue's offence against body and spirit in their inconstancy to their essential

beings. Once their "inappropriate" union is consummated, Lawrence baldly states, they can never be happy.

Sue and Jude could not lie to themselves, in their last and deepest feelings. They knew it was no marriage; they knew it was wrong, all along; they knew they were sinning against life, in forcing a physical marriage between themselves... Why^{then} should Jude and Sue have been brought to task? Only because of their own uneasy sense of wrong, of sin, which they communicated to other people. And this wrong or sin was not against the community, but against their own being, against life. Which is why they were, the pair of them, instinctively disliked. (S, 506)

The outraged bigots and conspiring Arabellas of Hardy's novel, in Lawrence's interpretation, form the authoritative outlook - "society" is treated as a healthy norm. In Lawrence's terms, society is cognizant of the marriage-sacrilege being committed by the unsuitable pairing of Jude and Sue, - and is therefore justifiably indignant, not prudish or hypocritical.

Lawrence believes that Jude and Sue instinctively side with the community's condemnation of their love, because they themselves lack the conviction that they deserve any better. Hence, the mood of Hardy's final chapters - of supersession and death, self-renunciation and slow suicide - fits with Lawrence's morality. Lawrence believes Jude is exhausted and worn down through emotional falsity and sexual frustration - "he had been dying slowly, but much quicker than she (Sue), since the first night she

(S,509)
 took him" - not through physical decline brought on by over-work and constant disappointment and disillusionment. Similarly, Sue returns to a religious ritual she despises not in surrender to a banal, mechanized Christianity, but in an act of remorse for her sin against her own nature.

The bare, brown, mean landscape of the novel's opening accurately foreshadows the desolate inner landscape of Jude's and Sue's final days. Sue yields to society and crushes the remnants of her instinctual self in an attempt to convince herself that redemption lies in duty and sacrifice. Jude has sufficient heroic stamina (though some would term it recklessness) to flounder on through the "inconsistencies" of life. While on his death-bed, roused by the shouts and hurrahs of the Christminster fête, he refuses to look away from the ironic and tragic conclusion of his dreams - "Ah - yes! The Remembrance games...And I here. And Sue defiled!" (J,423) He dies alone, shorn of all illusions, with Job's despairing invective on his parched lips: "Let the day perish wherein I was born... Let that day be darkness...Why died I not from the womb?... For now should I have lain still and been quiet. I should have slept: then had I been at rest." (J,424)

Lawrence pushes his interpretive perspective far past the bounds of credibility in his treatment of Jude's

tragic climax. The lack of proper lodging, combined with the knowledge of Sue's pregnancy, pushes Father Time to murder and suicide - "Done because we are too menny." (J,356)

Lawrence essentially ignores the horror of this scene and the blackness of Hardy's vision of a society that could create such a tragedy, instead insisting that it is only consistent for Arabella's child to kill Sue's children as a rightful judgement of the Law. Since Lawrence sees the children as Sue's attempted proofs and guarantees of herself as the physical woman she cannot be, he finds it only natural that they should vanish as "easily as hoarfrost" from her when Father Time rises up and destroys these "false creations ". Yet this wanton destruction of the children makes better sense in terms of Hardy's exploration of the spiritual problems of modern unrest, introspectiveness, melancholy and spiritual isolation. Father Time never exists as a rounded character

in the realistic tradition. He is an abstraction, "Age masquerading as Juvenility ", Hardy's graphic representation of the "coming universal wish not to live ". Flinching from the discords and illogic of life that he perfectly recognizes, Father Time finally takes it upon himself to shorten his life and those of the other "undesired" innocents, before they are forced to come to terms with this "garish, glaring, rattling" world. (J,295) (J,356) (J,38)

Lawrence's critique also omits Hardy's examination of the dark side of the rural order. From the initial harsh scenes of Jude driving the rooks from the drab bleak landscape and the inevitable callous greed of the farmer, Hardy makes it clear that Jude's passion for learning must transcend a life of grinding poverty and toil. Jude is rootless, deracinated and isolated from rural society by his aspirations. His ambitions, abilities and sensibility separate him from his own class, while winning him no space in any other. Jude himself recognizes the futility of his struggle - "the time was not ripe for us. Our ideas were fifty years too soon" - or again - "it was my poverty and not my will that consented to be beaten. It takes two or three generations to do what I tried to do in one..." (J, 345). From this Hardy launches into a trenchant critical appraisal of Christminster and all it stands for. Hardy attacks the validity of Christminster before Jude ever arrives, questioning the glowing "mirage" of the "heavenly Jerusalem" on the horizon. Hardy exposes an exclusive educational system which could, for reasons of class, keep out of the universities "one of the very men," as Sue says, "Christminster was intended for when the colleges were founded; a man with a passion for learning, but no money, or opportunities, or friends." (J, 170) Letters of rejection from the colleges are addressed to "Mr. J. Fawley -

Stone-mason" - Jude considered not as a person, but as a trade; a man who should not seek to go beyond the walls he is committed to patching and restoring. Here Hardy's social criticism is sharply direct and unequivocal in defence of the dignity of labour: "here in the stoneyard was a centre of effort as worthy as that dignified by the name of scholarly study within the noblest of colleges."^(J,104)

The irony is heavily underscored when Jude's only appreciative audience for all his years of painstakingly acquired self-education are his drinking companions in the slums of Christminster.

Hardy also mounts an uncompromising attack on the assumptions underlying the institution of marriage; a question which Hardy had dealt with again and again in his fiction and which he here dissects and lays open for inspection with brutal thoroughness. In light of the tragic, blood-bespattered farce it later becomes, Hardy's description of Jude's and Arabella's wedding takes on added ironic significance:

...the two swore that at every time of their lives till death took them, they would assuredly believe, feel and desire precisely as they had believed, felt, and desired during the few preceding weeks. What was as remarkable as the undertaking itself was the fact that nobody seemed at all surprised at what they swore. (J,78)

Hardy surrounds his presentation of marriage with images of deceit, entrapment, and maimed suffering: Jude ensnared by

the cunning Arabella's pregnancy ruse; Sue cowering like a trapped animal in the stairway closet to escape her conjugal duties to Phillots^(J,241)on; Arabella advocating a legally-binding union to Sue since "life with a man is more business-like after it, and money matters work better."^(J,288) This licensing of sexual attraction is ironically undercut by Sue's suggestion that if the marriage ceremony consisted of an oath enjoining people to cease from loving one another from that day on and to avoid each other as much as possible, there would be more loving couples.^(J,278) Despite its fundamental difficulties and problems, Jude's and Sue's common-law partnership, their "two-in-one^(J,357)ness", offers the only glimpse of a mutually loving, caring relationship - and this outside the realm of a legally-sanctioned marriage sacrament.

Of course, Lawrence in this critique, and the others, was not really interpreting but virtually rewriting Hardy's novels, imposing his own moral ordering. The Study is at times wonderfully perceptive, if startlingly uneven, though strictly limited in its analysis to personal relationships. For Hardy's novels, according to Lawrence, are about coming into being, or failure to come into being. Lawrence centres his concept of the novel on vivid, "true" relationships, on the expression of feelings that

surge beneath and border with the unconscious. With his exclusively personal and interior focus, Lawrence's critical method involves the retelling of Hardy's narratives as though he had written them, isolating only what interests him. This results in considerable insight, but also in an equally considerable shift in emphasis away from the novels Hardy actually wrote.

CONCLUSION

When Lawrence felt the need to redefine for himself the nature and purpose of the novel as a literary form, he did so in terms of an examination of the fiction of Thomas Hardy. Lawrence wrote to his literary agent, J.B. Pinker, in September, 1914, "What a miserable world. What colossal idiocy; this war. Out of sheer rage I've begun my book about Thomas Hardy. It will be about everything but Thomas Hardy, I am afraid - queer stuff - but not bad."¹ Many critics take Lawrence at his word and find the Study has little or nothing to do with Hardy, but the purpose of this thesis has been to demonstrate they are mistaken. Although Lawrence began by characterizing his Study as "mostly philosophicalish, slightly about Hardy", it does reveal, in fact, a great deal about Hardy and the kinship Lawrence felt with his novels. Lawrence's view of the novels may be partial, but his insights are true to the spirit of Hardy. The Study clearly sets apart and underlines those characteristics of Hardy which most appealed to Lawrence, and, as well, indicates the reasons why Lawrence borrows wholesale or modifies certain of Hardy's techniques for his own novels.

Lawrence sees in Hardy confirmation of his own conviction that mechanistic civilization brings with it increasing dehumanization and depersonalization - and a sharp mind-body dichotomy. In his stringent re-reading and reassessment of the novels, Lawrence concludes that Hardy anticipates his own belief that sex involves the whole of being and that there should exist no split between flesh and spirit - but duly records the fact that Hardy's chief characters fail to attain this wholeness of being. As Lawrence's criticism rightly emphasizes, Hardy focuses on the unconscious, instinctual part of his characters which frequently stands in opposition to society and culture, and their rigid laws, taboos and restrictions. Hardy repeatedly shows that rebellion against family, existing cultural mores and tradition invariably results in terrible alienation, loneliness and even destruction, with individuals tossed "outside" in the precarious open.

The novels attest to Hardy's deep desire to see men and women liberated, free to realize their fullest potential, yet unflinchingly portray the thwarting of man's aspirations by the disappointments of actual experience. In his examination of Hardy, Lawrence comes to grips with the struggle of men and women for perfect consummation of body and soul - a struggle which must go on within the world of

time and space with its frictions, resistances, dangers and distractions, but where either man or woman may lack sufficient stability or movement to keep the whole relationship in balance.² How the balance is kept or lost and how mankind copes with the insufficiencies of experience form the concerns of the Study.

However, in Hardy one senses with greater immediacy the external pressures of the world; the end result of these pressures graphically realized in the welter of confused intellect, misshapen growth and self-mistrusting passion the novels document. At times in Return of the Native, Tess and Jude, the social and philosophical issues take centre-stage, briefly overshadowing personal considerations, and this Lawrence's criticism ignores. The shift in emphasis inherent in Lawrence's interpretation seems, in this context, quite profound. Lawrence really only concerns himself with the quest for personal consummation in the novels. The action is all "inside" and personal; external pressures of class, fate and inhibiting tradition essentially disregarded or simply viewed as symbolic manifestations of inner personal imbalances. Lawrence pays little attention to Hardy's evident concern and outrage over social stupidities and intolerance. Hardy's savage critiques of class structures and rigid institutions - of marriage, the educational hierarchy and organized religion - find little place in Lawrence's Study. These considerations are either completely omitted or casually dismissed. This

distortion extends to any instances of Hardy's determinism or the novels' strong sense of manipulation through the agency of some external fate. Lawrence believes fate comes from within individual characters, and appears to have no interest in contemplating any circumstantial fate Hardy may show diverting characters' lives from their desired destinations. As the Study clearly shows, Lawrence firmly holds that characters' internal make-up determines their outcome; that what happens to them is only the expression of some element of their essential selves. Such a reading by definition excludes any sense of random contingency or disastrous coincidence one may receive when reading Hardy.

Despite these apparent limitations in his somewhat reckless and occasionally brilliant evaluation of the novels, Lawrence does illumine certain fundamental aspects of Hardy's work. In his critical analyses, Lawrence imposes his own "moral" ordering and stresses his own overriding concerns, to the virtual exclusion of all other considerations. Hence, the Study is limited, but intensely focussed. In his reading, Lawrence desires the fine balance of intellect and emotions which prevents the artist from going to extremes; the preservation of individual consciousness against social consciousness and self-consciousness; and the "quick" relatedness between

individuals and the living universe.³ Hardy's work satisfies Lawrence's wish for novels that explore the relationship between men and women and "the circumambient universe". Lawrence approves of Hardy's characters in so far as their basic values and struggles are concerned, and notes admiringly "none of the heroes and heroines care very much for money, or immediate self-preservation, and all of them are struggling hard to come into being."^(S,410) He applauds their instinct to live "wildly and with gorgeoussness"^(S,398) and his highest commendation for Hardy's people is that they are constantly doing "unreasonable things -quite, quite unreasonable things. They are always going off unexpectedly and doing something that nobody would do...it is all explosive."^(S,410)

Lawrence is fascinated by Hardy's characters for the same reason T.S. Eliot was so repelled by them - they are so little influenced by convention or social morality and so much by their own impulses, the morality of nature.⁴ Yet despite their struggles, virtually none of Hardy's characters "comes into being" or achieves the personal satisfaction that can be accomplished, as far as Lawrence is concerned, only through love. The failure of Hardy's characters to find love, to become complete, is the prevailing theme of Lawrence's study of Hardy's novels, and one that opens up the novels in many satisfying ways.

The Study's judgements are stamped always with Lawrence's own personality, dynamically and dramatically operative. The energy with which he applies his unusual convictions to Hardy's literature yields illuminating insights that can be matched perhaps nowhere else in criticism. The Study stands as a major critical work with significant historical, social, psychological and mythic perceptions, and is written with enormous verve and colour. The management of the whole is rhythmic, contrapuntal and climactic. Lawrence once wrote:

A critic must be able to feel the impact of a work of art in all its complexity and its force. To do so, he must be a man of force himself, which few critics are. A man with a paltry, impudent nature will never write anything but paltry, impudent criticism. And a man who is emotionally educated is as rare as a phoenix. 5

Lawrence is that rare, phoenix-like "emotionally educated" critic. His Study is an appealing and provocative work of criticism, at times disappointing and disturbing, yet in all an exciting and vital tribute to Hardy's genius.

EPILOGUE

In writing of Hardy, Lawrence was responding to something in the novels which he recognized as true for and in himself and vital to the production of his own novels. Apart from the fascinating critical analysis of Hardy, the Study also contains an implicit admission by Lawrence of his debt to Hardy as a novelist, as he moves in writing The Rainbow toward a new kind of novel, whose point of origin is the ground Hardy prepared. Large portions of the Study are devoted to working out Lawrence's own metaphysics of sexuality and dualism. Lawrence wrote to Amy Lowell in November, 1914 : "I am just finishing a book, supposed to be on Thomas Hardy, but in reality a sort of Confessions of my Heart. I wonder if it will ever come out..."¹ Lawrence's knowledge of the feelings which the reading of Hardy aroused in him brought illumination into his own beliefs at a time when he very much needed their clarification and precise articulation.

In the Study, it is easy to see what attracted Lawrence to Hardy. Lawrence sees in Hardy a truth he had himself discovered, an imaginative kinship: "His feeling, his instinct, his sensuous understanding is...very great

and deep - deeper than that, perhaps, of any English
 novelist.^(S, 480)" If Hardy was dear to Lawrence, it was because
 he rehabilitated not only Nature as a source of mystery
 and miracle, but Man himself. Hardy sought, like
 Lawrence after him, to make his human characters more
 wondrous and surprising than traditional realistic novels
 portrayed them. To make people merely functions of
 social values and conditions, participants in a merely
 human drama, was for Hardy, as for Lawrence, to relegate
 them to the ordinary and predictable. But as participants
 in a larger non-human drama, they became fascinating
 creatures too mysterious to be easily categorized. Here
 Lawrence intuitively senses a point of contact with his
 own work, for as he expressed it in a famous statement,
 "that which is physic - non-human, in humanity, is more
 interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element -
 which caused one to conceive a character in a certain moral
 scheme and make him consistent."²

Hardy is not free, any more than Lawrence is, to
 cross the threshold of "human" people on a permanent basis.
 Clym, Tess and Jude all have perfectly ordinary roots in
 the substance of human and social history. Only as
 creatures rooted in nature do they assume the majesty
 which elevates them beyond the human. What they do and

feel invites comparisons with the immensities and
 intensities of universal, elemental forces. Eustacia's
 form is "as soft to the touch as a cloud"^(RN,72), the raw
 material of an Olympian divinity; Clym's influence
 penetrates her "like summer sun"^(RN,129). In the presence of
 Angel's relentless love, Tess flinches "like a plant in
 too burning a sun"^(T,211). Like Cézanne whom Lawrence so admired,
 Hardy "paints out" of his characters "the so-called
 humanness, the personality, the "likeness ", the physical
 cliché"². The examples of this technique are many and varied,
 but perhaps most striking in Hardy's characterization of
 Tess. Her hair in the rain is "hardly better than
 seaweed"^(T,226); her skin as Angel kisses her "was as cold and
 damp to his mouth as a new-gathered mushroom"^(T,217); when she
 yawns in the morning Angel sees "the red interior of her
 mouth as if it had been a snake's"^(T,210). Hardy here captures his
 human characters not as the eye, but as the imagination
 beholds them. Hardy, in effect, "dehumanizes" his
 characters not to make them less human, but to make them
 more vividly and remarkably so. Lawrence here recognizes
 what Henry James did not, in his slighting dismissal of
 "the good little Thomas Hardy"³ - the originality of
 Hardy's genius and the brilliant eccentricity of his art
 and his imagination.

If the novelist creates his characters as more or less aggressive bundles of recognizable traits, as egos stabilized by manners and morals, the novel becomes a sequence of collisions between such "bundles" and produces the novel form Lawrence wishes to give up. If, however, the novelist creates his characters in a life-size medium, fictional and communal, which nurtures, provokes and makes room for the strength of impulse, the novel moves closer to what Lawrence desired in The Rainbow. Characters become not caricatures, or even conventional heroes, mere arbiters of manners and morals, but they are passions, first principles, and all the more human and individual for being so. In a famous letter to Edward Garnett, Lawrence speaks of the "transition" he believes his concepts of characterization are undergoing:

You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to discover are states of the single radically unchanged element. 4

Therefore, it is not surprising that shortly after defending his novel to Garnett, Lawrence should bring himself to a conscious critical encounter with Hardy's novels. This critical material, so intrinsic to his

imagination, gave him, as no other material could at this time, the stimulus, the framework and the range of possibilities for him to argue out and define his own artistic principles.

Lawrence turned to Hardy after struggling through at least three major drafts of the novel which was eventually to become The Rainbow. Lawrence records his frustration with his efforts:

It was full of beautiful things but it missed - I knew that it just missed being itself...I know that it is quite a lovely novel really - you know that the perfect statue is in the marble, the kernel of it. But the thing is the getting it out clean. 5

The Study comprises Lawrence's attempt to formulate and articulate his deepest convictions. Through studying Hardy's art and Hardy's people Lawrence found a new clarification of what the novel he had been trying to write was really about. Lawrence was impressed by the way Hardy's characters moved across a vast, impersonal landscape. He believed, as the Study indicates, that Hardy's characters exist essentially in terms of "being" and "consciousness ". In Sons and Lovers Lawrence's people had opened into dimensions of "being ", but still retained a recognizable density springing partly from autobiography and partly from the mode of "that hard⁶ violent style full of sensation and presentation." The

reading of Hardy taught Lawrence a great deal about the presentation of "beings" - about their relation to "the great background, vital and vivid" of nature and their embodiment in concretely rendered physical existence and consciousness.

Hardy's people (and particularly those in Jude the Obscure) clarified, extended and deepened Lawrence's whole understanding of the "impersonal" forces which he saw operating within and between men and women. In this way, the Study moves beyond an imaginative piece of literary criticism, to form the "structural skeleton" of what Lawrence had been trying to write about since Sons and Lovers - the creativity of marriage. Lawrence tries to formulate in the Study a way of looking at every personality and at all relationships as the outcome of conflict between two radically opposed forces, impersonal and universal - both vital to creative growth. Lawrence looked to Hardy to focus his perceptions, to crystallize his sense of the "passional problem". Through his imaginative engagement with Hardy, Lawrence defined his own evolving purposes as a novelist.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

- 1 Taken from Thomas Hardy's preface to Two on a Tower, as quoted by Roy Morell, Thomas Hardy The Will and the Way (Kuala Lumpur:University of Malaya Press, 1965), p. 11.
- 2 Douglas Brown, Thomas Hardy (1961 edition; London:Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1954), p.30.
- 3 Ibid., p.36.
- 4 John Holloway, The Charted Mirror (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), pp. 95-96.
- 5 Thomas Hardy, "The Dorsetshire Labourer ", Longmans' Magazine (1883) as quoted by Merryn Williams, Thomas Hardy and Rural England (London: MacMillan, 1972), p.113.
- 6 Brown, Thomas Hardy, p.89.
- 7 Williams, Thomas Hardy and Rural England, p.173.
- 8 For Brown's discussion of Clym, see Thomas Hardy, particularly pp.59-60.
- 9 Williams, Thomas Hardy and Rural England, p.141.
- 10 Ibid., p.142.
- 11 Brown, Thomas Hardy, p.60.
- 12 Williams, Thomas Hardy and Rural England, p.144.

13 See Arnold Kettle, "Thomas Hardy: Tess of the d'Urbervilles", in An Introduction to the English Novel (1978 edition; London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1953), II.

14 Ibid., p.45.

15 Ibid., p.52.

16 Ibid., p.46.

17 Ibid., p.52.

18 Ibid., p.52.
For similar remarks by Lawrence, which nonetheless deliver vastly different conclusions, see pp. 11-12 of the thesis.

19 Brown, Thomas Hardy, p.92.

20 Ibid., p.95.

21 Williams, Thomas Hardy and Rural England, p. 179.
For radically opposing view, see Lawrence's analysis of Angel Clare, pp. 76-77 of the thesis.

22 Brown, Thomas Hardy, p. 100.
Brown does grant, however, that Jude contains "scenes between the two protagonists whose psychological veracity may still astonish..." (p.100)

23 Ibid., p.98.

24 As quoted by Morell, Thomas Hardy The Will and the Way, p.1.

25 A.E. Elliott, Fatalism in the Works of Thomas Hardy (1971 edition; Philadelphia: Folcroft Library Editions, 1935), p.15.

- 26 Ibid., p.51.
- 27 Florence Emily Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy 1840-1928 (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1962), pp. 243-44.
- 28 F.R. Southerington, Hardy's Vision of Man (London: Chatto and Windus, 1971), pp.143-44.
- 29 E. Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon (N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p.144.
- 30 F.E. Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy, p.224.
- 31 Thomas Hardy, "In Tenebris ", in W.E. Houghton and G.R. Stange, eds., Victorian Poetry and Poetics (2nd edition; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968), pp. 815-816.
- 32 Thomas Hardy, Far From the Madding Crowd (London: MacMillan, New Wessex Edition, 1974), p.344.
- 33 Morell, Thomas Hardy The Will and the Way, p.89.
- 34 Ibid., p.103.
- 35 Stanley E. Fish, "Affective Stylistics ", Self-Consuming Artifacts (Berkley: University of California Press, 1972).
- 36 Ian Gregor, The Great Web The Form of Hardy's Major Fiction (London: Faber and Faber, 1974), p.26.
- 37 Ibid., p.28.
- 38 Ibid., p.33.
- 39 Valentine Cunningham, The Great Web (book review), New Statesman, LXXXVIII (1974), p.190.

40

By his reaction, Gregor implicitly is opposing W.K. Wimsatt's and M.C. Beardsley's formulation of the "affective fallacy ". See M.H. Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms (3rd Edition; N.Y.:Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), p.3 for a brief definition of this doctrine of "objective criticism ".

41

Gregor, The Great Web, p.29.

42

Ibid., p.27.

43

Ibid., p.28.

44

Ibid., p.26.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I - LAWRENCEAN CRITICISM

- 1 John Danby, as quoted by K.W. Salter, "Lawrence, Hardy and the Great Tradition ", English, XXII (1973), p.60.
- 2 F.R. Leavis, D.H. Lawrence Novelist (London: Chatto and Windus, 1955), p.14.
- 3 David J. Gordon, D.H. Lawrence as a Literary Critic (New Haven:Yale University Press, 1966).
- 4 Richard Foster, "Criticism as Rage: D.H. Lawrence" (1959) in M. Spilka, ed., D.H. Lawrence (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963).
- 5 Ileana Cura-Sazdanic, D.H. Lawrence as Critic (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1969).
- 6 D.H. Lawrence, Studies in Classic American Literature, excerpts reprinted in A. Beal, ed., D. H. Lawrence Selected Literary Criticism (N.Y:Viking Press, 1966), p.297.
- 7 Letter quoted in Foster, "Criticism as Rage," p.156.
- 8 D.H. Lawrence, "Surgery for the Novel - or a Bomb," Phoenix, ed. Edward D. McDonald (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978), p.518.
- 9 Ibid., p.518.
- 10 Ibid., p.520.
- 11 Citing Joyce, Dorothy Richardson and Proust as the worst offenders in such calculated introspection in

their works, Lawrence indulges in one of the characteristic rampages which so long obscured the relevance of any of his critical remarks:

"So there you have the "serious" novel, dying in a very long-drawn-out fourteen-volume death-agony, and absorbedly, childishly interested in the phenomenon. "Did I feel a twinge in my little toe, or didn't I?" asks every character of Mr. Joyce or of Miss Richardson or M. Proust. Is my aura a blend of frankincense and orange pekoe and boot-blackening, or is it myrrh and bacon-fat and Shetland tweed?"

("Surgery for the Novel-or a Bomb," Phoenix, p.517)

Such tirades tended to call the whole of Lawrence's critical judgements into question.

12

D.H. Lawrence, preface to Cavalleria Rusticana by Giovanni Verga, Phoenix, p.248.

13

Lawrence, "Surgery for the Novel-or a Bomb," p.517.

14

Lawrence in a letter to J.B. Pinker, his literary agent, written 16 December, 1915. Reprinted in The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, edited by H.T. Moore (N.Y: Viking Press, 1962), I, p.329.

15

See Foster, "Criticism as Rage," p.154.

16

Lawrence, "John Galsworthy," Phoenix, p.539.

17

Lawrence, from Studies in Classic American Literature, reprinted in Beal, Selected Literary Criticism, p.297.

18

Gordon, D.H. Lawrence as a Literary Critic, p.1.

19

Lawrence as quoted by Beal, Selected Literary Criticism, p.ix.

20

W.H. Auden as quoted in Gordon, D.H. Lawrence as a Literary Critic, p.1.

21

Alfred Kazin, "The Function of Criticism Today," Commentary, XXX (1960), p.371.

22

Foster, "Criticism as Rage," p.153.

23

Lawrence captures this vision of transcendent consummation, the paradigm of ideal relationships, in the archetypal Romantic image of the rose:

"There must be two in one, always two in one—the sweet love of communion and the fierce, proud love of sensual fulfillment, both together in one love. And then we are like a rose. We surpass even love, love is encompassed and surpassed. We are two who have a pure connexion. We are two, isolated like gems in our unthinkable otherness. But the rose contains and transcends us, we are one rose, beyond."

("Love ", Phoenix, pp.154-55)

24

I am indebted in this analysis to H.M. Daleski's excellent study, The Forked Flame (Evanston:Northwestern University Press, 1965), p.26.

25

Ibid., p.26.

26

See Richard M. Swigg, Lawrence, Hardy and American Literature (London:Oxford University Press, 1972), p.68.

27

Lawrence defines "morality" in the novel in these terms: "Morality in the novel is the trembling instability of the balance. When the novelist puts his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection, that is immorality." ("Morality and the Novel," Phoenix, p.528).

28

p.61.

Swigg, Lawrence, Hardy and American Literature,

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2 - RETURN OF THE NATIVE

- 1 H.T. Moore, The Collected Letters, I, p.323.
- 2 William Blake, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," in David V. Erdman, ed., The Poetry and Prose of William Blake (N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), p.35.
- 3 Swigg, Lawrence, Hardy and American Literature, p.60.
- 4 John Paterson, as quoted by Ian Gregor, The Great Web, p.81.
- 5 Hardy seems, however, at times to be encouraging a reading like Lawrence's, as he toys with the symbolic resonances of the speculation that Egdon may be the Heath of "that traditionary King of Wessex - Lear." (Hardy, preface to The Return of the Native).
- 6 Gregor, The Great Web, p.82.
- 7 Blake, "Annotations to the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds," p.634.
- 8 Gregor, The Great Web, p.87.
- 9 Ibid., p.87.
- 10 Swigg, Lawrence, Hardy and American Literature, p.63.
- 11 Blake, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," p.39

12

Ibid., p.39.

13

Lawrence echoes Hardy when depicting the close bond between Mrs. Morel and Paul. In one of their many confrontations over his relationship with Miriam, Paul comes to a recognition of what his existence means to his mother - "Instinctively he realized that he was life to her. And, after all, she was the chief thing to him, the only supreme thing."

(Sons and Lovers (Harmondsworth:Penguin, 1977), p.261.)

14

Gregor, The Great Web, p.97.

15

"Was Yeobright's mind well-proportioned? No. A well-proportioned mind is one which shows no particular bias; one which we may safely say will never cause its owner to be confined as a madman, tortured as a heretic, or crucified as a blasphemer. Also, on the other hand, that it will never cause him to be applauded as a prophet, revered as a priest, or exalted as a king."
The Return of the Native, p.177.

16

Gregor, The Great Web, p.108.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3 - TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

1

J.C. Maxwell briefly discusses these critical approaches to Hardy in an article, "The 'Sociological' Approach to The Mayor of Casterbridge," reprinted in M. Mack and I. Gregor, eds., Imagined Worlds (London: Methuen, 1968), pp. 225-26.

2

Gregor, The Great Web, p. 183.

3

Ibid., p. 178.

4

Swigg, Lawrence, Hardy and American Literature, p. 77.

5

Ibid., p. 77.

6

Tess obviously blames herself and her "weakness" in submitting to Alec's desires, implying that the scene in the dark Chase was, in some respects, a seduction. Confronting Alec as she leaves Trantridge for Marlott, she bitterly condemns herself: "If I had gone for love o' you, if I had ever sincerely loved you, if I loved you still, I should not so loathe and hate myself for my weakness as I do now!... My eyes were dazed by you for a little, and that was all!" (Tess, p. 112)

7

Yet Tess's being was violated, raped by Alec, for she believes there is a chance, a possibility to renew herself again; wipe the slate clean and erase whatever sexual bond she had with Alec.

"Yet even now Tess felt the pulse of hopeful life still warm within her; she might yet be happy in some nook which had no memories. To escape the past and all that appertained

thereto was to annihilate it, and to do that she would have to get away. Was once lost always lost really true of chastity? She would ask herself. She might prove it false if she could veil bygone. The recuperative power which pervaded organic nature was surely not denied to maidenhood alone." (Tess, p.135)

8

See Arnold Kettle's discussion, "Tess of the d'Urbervilles," An Introduction to the English Novel, p.46.

9

Ibid., p.50.

10

Lawrence, "Democracy," Phoenix, p.711.

11

Lawrence, in light of his critical precepts, validly interprets Angel's "ascetic revulsion". However, in viewing this merely as Angel's inability to integrate the sensual and physical with his "divinity" or spiritual essence, Lawrence ignores the social comment Hardy additionally is making. Angel cannot rise above Victorian sexual mores, the "double standard" of acceptable behavior for men and women, and thus forgive Tess's "lapse". This point is forcefully underlined by Hardy, who makes it very clear that Angel himself has had past experiences to explain away and forget. (See Angel's account of his "eight-and-forty hours' dissipation with a stranger", p.267).

12

K.W. Salter, "Hardy, Lawrence and The Great Tradition", p.65.

13

John Alcorn, The Nature Novel from Hardy to Lawrence (London:MacMillan, 1977), pp.16-17.

14

F.E. Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy, pp.214-15.

15

Gregor, The Great Web, p.192.

16

Ibid., p.192.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4 - JUDE THE OBSCURE

1
p.245. Ian Gregor, "Jude the Obscure.", Imagined Worlds,

2
Gregor, The Great Web, p.38.

3
Sue's vision of civilization's restrictions adopts the metaphoric opposition of "real star patterns" and "conventional shapes of the constellations." (J,226) In Women in Love, Lawrence characterizes ideal relationships as "this star-equilibrium which alone is freedom." Birkin tells Ursula, "'What I want is a strange conjunction with you...not a meeting and mingling; - you are quite right: - but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings: - as the stars balance each other.'" (Women in Love (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), pp.360,164).

4
p.29. Swigg, Lawrence, Hardy and American Literature,

5
F.E. Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy, p.272.
Hardy's explanation should not necessarily be given precedence, but he certainly does point to another viable interpretation of the relationship between Jude and Sue which should be considered.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

- 1 Quoted by Alcorn, The Nature Novel from Hardy to Lawrence, p.78.
- 2 Swigg, Lawrence, Hardy and American Literature, p.81.
- 3 Aruna Sitiesh, D.H. Lawrence The Crusader as Critic (Delhi: MacMillan, 1975), p.112.
- 4 Gordon, D.H. Lawrence as a Literary Critic, p.84.
- 5 D.H. Lawrence, "John Galsworthy," Phoenix, p.539.

NOTES TO EPILOGUE

- 1 Quoted by Daleski, The Forked Flame, p.24.
- 2 D.H. Lawrence, in Beal, Selected Literary Criticism, p.17.
- 3 Quoted by R.G. Cox, Thomas Hardy The Critical Heritage (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p.xxxi.
- 4 D.H. Lawrence, in Beal, Selected Literary Criticism, p.18.
- 5 Quoted by Mark Kinhead - Weekes, "The Marble and the Statue: The Exploratory Imagination of D.H. Lawrence ", in M. Mack and I. Gregor, eds., Imagined Worlds, p.373.
This excellent article by Kinhead - Weekes is extremely useful in tracing the evolutionary development of The Rainbow through its various drafts.
- 6 Ibid., p.381.
- 7 The Study can be viewed, in one sense, as the "structural skeleton" of The Rainbow. But it is not a skeleton key and must not be misused as one. It is the greatest of commentaries on what the novel is fundamentally about, but it is a treatise, and The Rainbow is not. When its "ideas" are embodied in the human relationships of three generations in the Brangwen family, the testing, exploring and extending of its basic insights yields an enormous increase in subtlety and complexity.
See Keith Sagar, The Art of D.H. Lawrence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p.179 ff.

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