

م.د. محمد ناجي حسين

تدريسي في قسم اللغة الانكليزية / كلية التربية الاساسية / جامعة ديالى

محاضرة نموذجية تركز على ملخص احد روايات توماس هاردي في الادب الانكليزي

## A Brief Critical Summary of Jude the Obscure

Jude the Obscure is Thomas Hardy's cosmic and complex tragedy. It is his last novel which was published in 1895. It is also one of his pessimistic and the most surprising and strange novels as it deals with love of two cousins who fall in love but each one of them marries the wrong person. Thus, each one of them becomes victim as a result of their own actions .

Furthermore, it is a story which describes the tragedy of the victim hero, Jude Fawley who fails to achieve his ambition of becoming a scholar at Christminster University.

Jude the Obscure is a story of Jude Fawley who is a poor orphan. Mr. Richard Phillotson inspires him to become a scholar. Jude cannot achieve his aim because of his poverty and because of his involvement with Arabella. He tries to study Greek and Latin on his own by borrowing books from Vilbert. He also learns to be a stone-mason when he is nineteen years old. Jude marries Arabella inspite of his aunt's opposition. He is tricked in to the marriage because of the false claim of Arabella that she is pregnant. After her marriage with Jude she confesses to him that she was not pregnant. So, Jude is disillusioned with her and he tries to commit suicide. She runs away with her parents to Australia.

In Christminster, Jude falls in love with his attractive cousin, Sue Bridehead. He talks to her frankly about his previous marriage. Sue Bridehead decides not to marry him, but she marries Richard Phillotson instead. She is not happy with her husband and so she leaves him and lives with Jude.

When Jude and his family come to Christminster, they face the problem of accommodation which is mainly because of the children. This makes Little Father Time, Arabella's son from Jude, kill Sue Bridehead's children from Jude and himself.

Jude works hard and obtains lodgings in Beersheba. Sue Bridehead feels guilty. She believes that her children were sacrificed because of her sins. She also thinks that she is still Richard Phillotson's wife. She regularly goes to the church. She can no longer love Jude and finally she goes back to Richard Phillotson. Jude laments that Sue Bridehead has never loved him passionately. He begs her to stay with him, but she leaves him. Finally, after his final visit to Sue Bridehead in freezing weather, Jude becomes seriously sick and dies.

Jude is defeated by his own passions for women and sex. He cannot control his passions, so he cannot achieve his goal of becoming a scholar; for physical pleasures he sacrifices his intellectual pursuits. Moreover, university education is not meant for poor people like him.

The novel deals mainly with the passion of human beings. Hardy describes it as the deadly war waged between flesh and spirit, the fret and fever, derision and disaster, and the tragedy of unfulfilled aims. Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead become victims of their own desires as they could not control their attractions for each other. They neglect their passion for learning and don't pursue scholarship at Christminster. Sex plays a crucial role in victimizing Jude Fawley when he succumbs to his sexual desire towards the charm of Arabella Donn, and the romanticism of Sue Bridehead .

In other words, he becomes a victim as he is caught between war of flesh and spirit as Arabella Donn represents the flesh and Sue Bridehead represents the spirit which confuses him till he reaches his downfall. Thus, he is described as the lonely individual who is involved in a personal struggle as much of his fight is with himself in fulfilling his wishes .