

Philosophical Reflections on Determinism and Human Suffering in Thomas Hardy's Works

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Abstract: *Thomas Hardy's novels depict a world governed by deterministic forces where human suffering unfolds as an inevitable consequence of fate, heredity, and societal constraints. Hardy's philosophical perspective resonates with the pessimistic determinism of Arthur Schopenhauer, where human will is rendered powerless against the inexorable march of destiny. Through an exploration of key novels such as Tess of the d'Urbervilles, Jude the Obscure, and The Mayor of Caster bridge, this study investigates Hardy's philosophical reflections on determinism and the existential dimensions of human suffering. It explores how Hardy portrays individuals caught in a web of inevitable circumstances, often rendering their moral agency irrelevant. The study also draws on Schopenhauer's concepts of the "will-to-live" and "the futility of desire," along with Friedrich Nietzsche's ideas on suffering and eternal recurrence, to contextualize Hardy's bleak worldview. Furthermore, psychological insights derived from Freudian theories of repression and trauma provides a deeper understanding of the emotional turmoil experienced by Hardy's characters*

Keywords: Thomas Hardy, Determinism, Human Suffering, Existentialism, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Fatalism, Psychological Trauma.