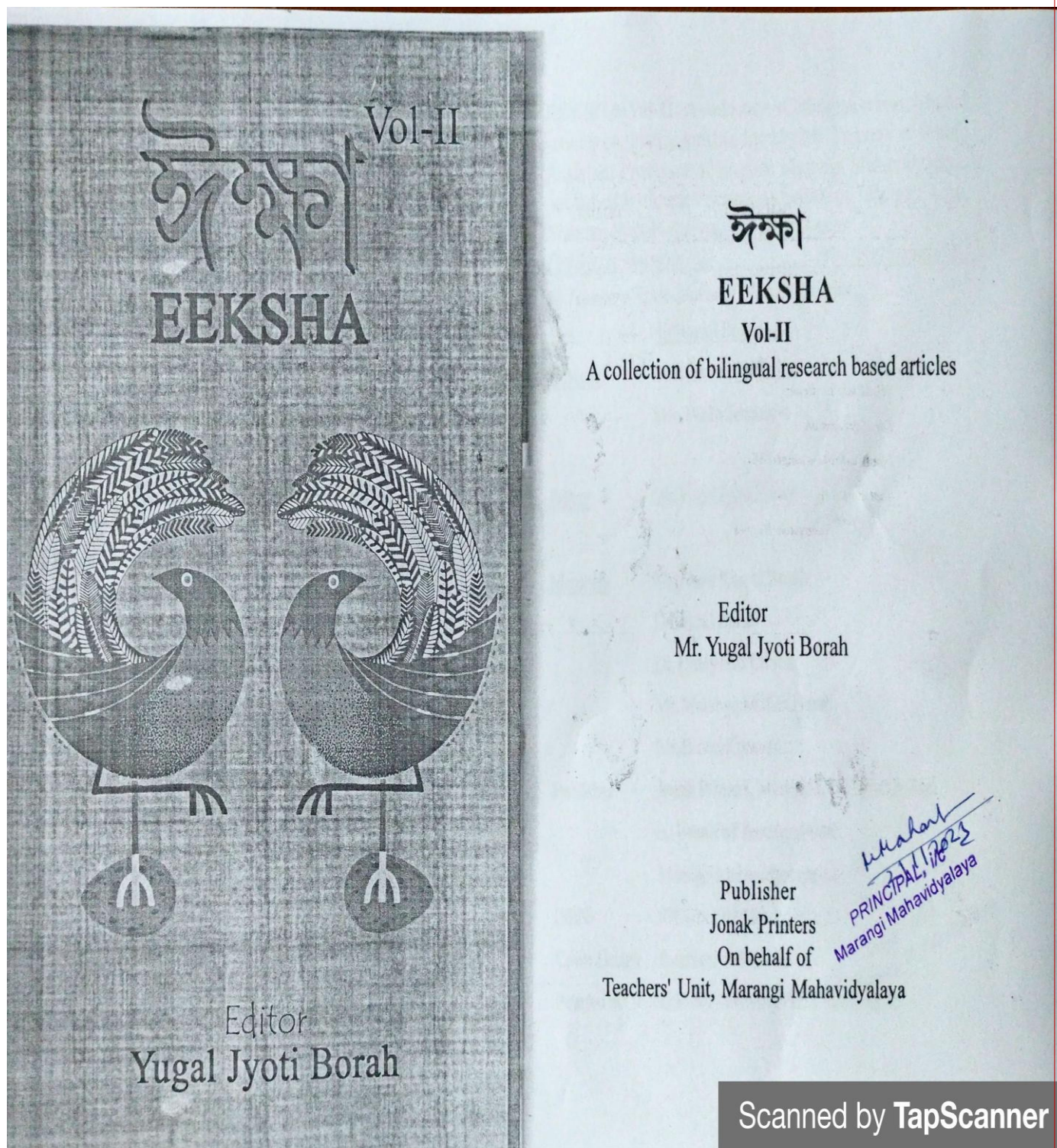


2022-2023  
Articles Published in Books

1. Yugal Jyoti Borah

Disintegration of English Peasantry in Thoma Hardy's Tess of The D'Urberlles'



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## Editorial

### Society and Literature

Literature is the mirror of human thought and feelings. It attracts the readers in two ways—the matter and manner of expressing thoughts and ideas and adds to their fund of knowledge and experience.

We live in a society. As social being we like to hear about our fellow men who live in society, their thoughts and feelings, their likes and dislikes. The persons who have the power of language to express human feelings, can be regarded as litterateur who are well on the way to creating literature. In other words, the subject matter of literature is society in some form or other. A novelist portrays his story of a specific or we may say multi-specific background, a poet expresses his feeling on various heart touching world of human emotion, anxiety etc. and we who read their works are interested and feel at one with him and ourselves. After all, society is this bond of fellowship between man and man through communication that the poet or writer seeks.

If literature expresses social sympathies, naturally it is bound to exercise some positive influence on our mind and attitude. Society reacts to literature in a living way. Any inspiring piece of literary work creates general influence on society. It rouses our feelings and enthusiasm for welfare.

Mathew Arnold says that more and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us. Shelley has also called

poets the unacknowledged legislators of mankind. The function of a legislator is to lay down the law, a settled course of action that men may follow. Poetry and literature generally do this in a quiet and unobtrusive way. Novels are known to have changed the direction of the human mind and set in motion movements that have altered our ways of life. The novels of E. M. Forster indicates humanist view of life. He tries to focus on human relationships and the need for tolerance, sympathy and love between individual human beings from different parts of society and different cultures.

The influence of literature on society is felt directly or indirectly. Thus Miss Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was directly responsible for a movement against slavery in literature and life in USA of those days. The novels of Dickens had an indirect influence in creating in society a feeling for regulating and removing social wrongs, calling for necessary reforms. Hardy's "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" is a vivid reflection of the social and moral degradation of the eighteenth and nineteenth century England. It is truly a symbolic representation of the disintegration of the English peasantry which can be regarded as the realistic outcome of the Industrial Revolution.

Thus, society creates literature. From this point of view, literature may be regarded as the mirror of the society. But the quality and nature of the reflection depends upon the writer's attitude of mind, whether he is progressive in his outlook or reactionary.

Naturally, conservative-minded writer will stress those aspects of social life, which put the traditional ways

of life in the best possible way. On the other hand, a progressive writer will tend to show how old ideals act as restraints on the natural freedom of the human mind, cripple the free movement of man and women in an unrestricted atmosphere, set for liberating new ideals and moving society that looks forward to newer ways of life.

We expect such a pragmatic perspective from the writers. It is strongly expected that only the value base literature may fill up the readers world with positive vibes to change their personal as well as social attitude in order to sprinkle warm light to the society we live.

*Yugal Jyoti Borah*  
Editor,  
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*M. Habant*  
27/11/2025  
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## DISINTEGRATION OF ENGLISH PEASANTRY IN THOMAS HARDY'S 'TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES'

Yugal Jyoti Borah  
Assistant Professor  
Department of English  
Marangi Mahavidyalaya

### Abstract:

Thomas Hardy's remarkable novel "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" was first published in 1891. The novel is very typical in depiction of people, life style, moral constructs and personal dilemmas of the day, especially regarding cross-class conflicts. David Daiches says it is "a story of innocence and sophistication, of man and nature, of history and its relation to the present, concentrated on the fate of a simple country girl..."<sup>1</sup> It is known to us that Hardy is a great master in depicting the rich and complex relationship between man and nature. The mid-twentieth century visitor of Dorsetshire and the adjacent continues will be unlikely to move easily into Hardy's Wessex. In all his novels Hardy tries to put the stories into a definite framework which has a proper social and economic background. In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* also Hardy does not forget to build up his story without such background. In this story the background is based on the Victorian social and economic condition resulting of the Industrial Revolution. In this setting and social background of the novel Thomas Hardy destructive picture of the English country life. Through the whole story of the novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* Thomas Hardy, with his artistic excellence, is go-

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ing to project the theme of disintegration of English peasantry specially with the symbolic representation of the character of Tess. Hardy has himself stated that the subject of the novel is the fate of a "pure of woman". It is the fate of Tess, a peasant girl, through which the novelist has expressed his idea of the destruction of the English peasantry. Actually the novel is a comprehensive thesis having all the qualities of a social document of the nineteenth century England.

(Key words: disintegration, peasantry, values, industrial revolution)

### The story:

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is a heart touching story of an innocent girl named Tess. After her impoverished family learns of its noble lineage, naive Tess Durbeyfield is sent by her slothful father and ignorant mother to make an appeal to a nearby wealthy family who bear the ancestral name d'Urberville. Tess, attractive and innocent, is seduced by dissolute Alec d'Urberville and secretly bears a child, Sorrow, who dies in infancy. Later working as a dairymaid, she meets and marries Angel Clare, an idealistic gentleman who rejects Tess after learning of her past on their wedding night. Emotionally bereft and financially impoverished, Tess is trapped by necessity into giving in once again to d'Urberville, but she murders him when Angel returns.

In the framework of this story Thomas Hardy has projected the theme of disintegration of peasantry in English society. He also tries to focus on various negative effects of the Industrial Revolution through the story of Tess.

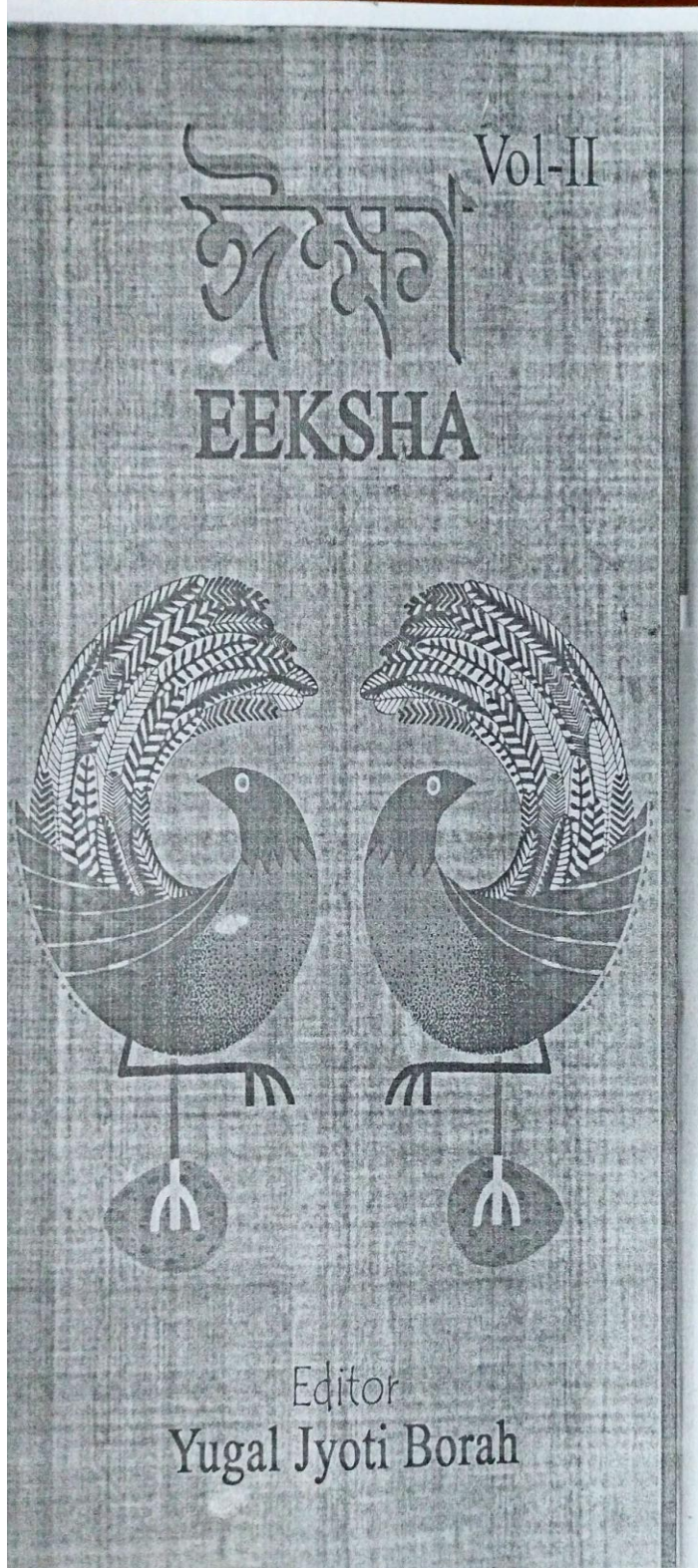
### Objectives:

1. To discuss how the Industrial Revolution of England affected the entire life of mankind.
2. To discuss the situation of the women workers during the Industrial Revolution.

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2. Yugal Jyoti Borah



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Mr. Yugal Jyoti Borah

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