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Determinism of Poverty or Poverty of Determination? A Sociological Study of Sādeq Chubak's The Patient Stone and Thomas Hardy's Jude the Obscure Based on Pierre Bourdieus' Theory

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Article Info	Extended Abstract
<p>Article type: Research Article</p> <p>Article history: Received: 28 July 2022 Received in revised form: 12 December 2022 Accepted: 07 January 2023 Published online: Summer 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Forms of capital, Jude the Obscure, The Patient Stone, Pierre Bourdieu, Sādeq Chubak, sociological criticism, Thomas Hardy.</p>	<p>The study of humans as social creatures is, of course, not limited to sociology. One of the main concerns of literary works has always been the representation of human beings within societies, exploring their worries, concerns, and fears in relation to others and social structures. The sociological analysis of literary texts is a new field which focuses on this relationship and arrives at a deep and different understanding of the two fields. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu believes that society consists of different fields within which individuals fight for better positions and places (capitals). According to his theory, capital is not limited to economic capital and includes social, cultural and symbolic ones too, which strengthen and reinforce it; economic capital is not stable without the other forms of capital. In general, social capital refers to the relations and groups within which individuals improve and add to their other capitals. Cultural capital exists in three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. Embodied cultural capital refers to the hereditary and internalized attributes which are usually passed over to the individual through family. Objectified cultural capital is related to cultural goods such as books, machinery, and artistic products. Institutionalized cultural capital involves institutions and organizations. Symbolic capital is a quality which, as the result of other capitals, brings the individual social status and respect. This article uses Bourdieu's concepts and theory to give a fresh reading and interpretation of Sādeq Chubak's <i>The Patient Stone</i> (1989) and Thomas Hardy's <i>Jude the Obscure</i> (1895). Both novels are among the most distinguished works of Naturalism and have, therefore, been commonly analyzed in terms of their emphasis on environmental determinism. This study shows that the characters in these novels lack the ability to accumulate basic capitals, and their efforts to obtain capitals, particularly cultural capital, fail not solely because of environmental determinism but because of their ignorance and failure to seize life's opportunities. According to Bourdieu's theory, individual and social structures are of the same importance. Therefore, despite the determining role of social structures, a more significant role for individual will must be accommodated. Another finding of this article is that the Iranian society presented in <i>The Patient Stone</i> is more suppressive than the English society in <i>Jude the Obscure</i>. Despite the oppressive atmosphere in the Iranian society, the male characters are responsible for their failures, whereas women have to accept the unhappy fate that the patriarchal and superstitious society imposes on them.</p>

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