

THE ANALYSIS OF THE TRAGIC EFFECTS OF A STAINED WOMAN IN THOMAS HARDY'S NOVEL "TESS OF THE D'UREBERVILLES"

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ABSTRACT

This study is regarded to be an analysis study of one of Thomas Hardy's novel, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles". Tess, as a stained woman feels that the society have rejected her due to the mistakes that she unconsciously has made. She is stained because of her foolishness and innocence. As the other effect, her husband also rejects her as his wife. This writing is hoped to be able to help those who want to broaden their knowledge on the English Literature, especially on Thomas Hardy's works and his masterpiece, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles", and it will be useful as reference for other researchers and all readers who want to know or analyse Thomas Hardy's work.

INTRODUCTION

In this writing, the writer is going to analyse one of Thomas Hardy's novel, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles". Thomas Hardy (1840 – 1928) is one of England's greatest novelist who has contributed many literary works, such as, novel, poetry, and short stories. And most of his works are accepted by society.

Having finished reading the novel, finally, the writer finds out that it is very interesting to be analysed. She tries to disclose the tragic effects of a stained woman as a topic of the analysis. She will analyse how the society and her husband reject her after being stained.

Although this novel can be analysed from various aspects, yet the writer only analyses from the protagonist's tragedy of losing her virginity. She is not going to criticize the novel but she will analyse how the protagonist faces the tragedy in her life.

BACKGROUND OF THE AUTHOR

Thomas Hardy (June 2, 1840 – January 11, 1928) novelist and poet, was born on the Edgan Heath, in Dorset, near Dorchester. In 1863, he studied architect with Sir Arthur Bloomfield and won a prize in 1863 in a national competition for essays on the application of colored bricks and terra cotta to modern architecture. He stayed with Bloomfield until 1867, and for six years afterward was practicing architect.

Meanwhile, he was persistently writing poetry, which was his first literary love and his last. No one of them was published until 1898, when his career as a novelist was over. Actually, his first published work was an anonymous humorous sketch, which he wrote for the amusement of his association in Bloomfield office.

In 1867, he had already written his first novel, *"The Poor Man and the Lady"*. But it is rejected, because it had not enough plot. *"Desperate Remedies"*, was quite inferior to the one he had burnt, because he crowded it with a melodramatic and artificial plot. It, too, was anonymous.

The very next year *"Under the Greenwood Tree"* appeared and, this time, though he did not make much profit, there was no loss. *"A Pair of Blue Eyes"* followed, and Hardy at last convinced that it was better than the architecture would. He became sure of it in 1874, for *"Far From Madding Crowd"*, commissioned first great serial by Cornhill's Magazine, was his first great financial and literary success.

In 1883, the Hardy's, moved to Dorchester. Two years later – probably his last architectural effort - they built their famous house, which they called Maxgate. The succession of annual or biennial novels, almost every one was a masterpiece of its kind, culminated in 1891, in *"Tess of the D'Urbervilles"*.

It was customary to say that it was because of this reception of two of his greatest novels that Hardy announced in 1896 that he would never write fiction again, and kept his word was issued as a book in 1897, but had appeared as a serial in 1892. This is a falsification of a complex situation.

At the beginning of 1928, he caught a cold, which proved fatal. The day before he died, he asked his wife to read him stanza of the Rubaiyat' which begins, *"O thou who man of baser earth didst make"*. The stanza is almost too perfect epitome of Hardy's own philosophy and of his attitude toward humanity.

On January 16, five days after his death, there was an impressive memorial service, attended by the most eminent men in England and by thousand who came to do honor to one they referred.

It was a poet that he wished to be remembered, and it is possible that in the end his poetry will be felt to out weight his prose. It is intellectual poetry, cryptic, sometimes difficult, full of distinction and personal idiom yet often beautifully lyrical made no mistake in knowing himself for a poet.

If he had written only his earlier novels – that is, the series from *"Under the Greenwood Tree"* to *"The Woodlanders"* – it might be granted that his poems were his more valid contribution to English literature. Yet these novels are so rich with the very soil of England, so penetrating in their psychology, so fresh and colorful, that they alone would have made any writers fame. Nowhere else in English Fiction are to be found the profundity, the unification of feeling, the perfect presentation of great tragedy, that make *"Tess of the D'Urbervilles"* and *"Jude the Obscure"* immortal.

SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

One evening at the end of May, John Durbeyfield knows that he is the direct descendant of the ancient and noble family of the d'Urbervilles. The village of Marlott lies in the beautiful Vale of Blackmoor. And in the village of Marlott, following ancient custom, the young women gathered to dance every holiday. Tess and her friends enter the club, but Tess only watches them dancing with the men. There are three young strangers, who are passing by and stop to join the dancers. They are three brothers on a walking tour. The elder two continue their walk, but the youngest seems more interested in the girls than his brothers do, and stays to dance with them. As he leaves the dance, he notices Tess, who seems a little sad that he has not chosen her. His eyes seem that he feels sorry because he does not have a chance to dance with her even he does not know her name. Tess cannot forget the young man and hopes they can meet some day. At the sun set Tess goes home and her mother asks her to stay at home to look after the children while she is going to fetch her husband at Rolliver's inn. John Durbeyfield is very upset that there is fat around his heart and he might live for about ten years, months or days. That is the reason why he goes to Rolliver's inn to build up his strength to deliver the beehives.

Tess's father cannot go to deliver the beehives. Tess and Abraham, her brother, go to the Saturday market at the Casterbridge, lead out on old horse, named Prince, with a loaded wagon. Abraham informs her the conversation of their parents about her. He tells Tess that they have a noble relationship with a rich lady at Trantridge. If Tess wants to claim relationship with her, her mother will help her to marry her son. Tess does not want to hear that and gets angry with the matter.

Tess thinks that she has no hopes for in the future. Many rich gentlemen laugh at her poverty and they are not interested in her narrow minded family. The wagon suddenly stops and a horrible voice comes out from the horse, Prince. Tess gets off and tries to search for what has happened to Prince. She feels it is her fault and sees her self as a murderer. Without Prince, John cannot easily continue his work and Tess feels guilty. She wonders how she can help her parents. Her mother suggests her to go to the d'Urbervilles lady and claim in their trouble. Tess accepts her plan to redeem her fault who has killed Prince and loses the one of their family's own, the horse which helps her father to earn a living for their family.

Tess goes to Trantridge and is welcomed by a young man who looks about twenty-four, and is tall and dark, with full red lips and a black moustache curled at the ends. He is the man with an unpleasant face but looks strong. After Tess has told him about her family she decides to go home soon, because she does not like Alec's attitude behaving like a coquette man. On her way home, Tess does not realize that this day is not a proper time for her to meet this man. This, then, is the beginning of her tragic life.

Two days later, Tess receives a letter from Mrs. Stoke d'Urberville. She offers her to be a worker at her fowl-farm. A comfortable room and food will be provided if she works well, and get a high salary. Tess feels reluctant to work there because she will always meet Alec d'Urberville, Mrs. Stoke's son. Finally, Tess accepts the job in order to help her father and promised to give him a new horse. On her first

day working, she has to take some of the chickens to show to the owner. She immediately realizes that Mrs. Stoke is an old blind lady of sixty. Tess begins to enjoy her work with the chickens.

Every Saturday night the other farm workers from the surrounding area are used to going to drink and dance in the market town. Tess decides to go with them after her routine works. Some of them have drunk a lot. She becomes worried when she realizes the workers were still dancing wildly and will not going home soon. She wants to get away from them as soon as possible because she realizes that it is already late at night. However, after a while, she becomes involved in a quarrel with them, and is trying to get away from the angry group. When Alec d'Urberville rides by, he offers to take her home on the back of his horse. She hesitates, then accepts it because she feels so weak and tired. Suddenly, she realizes that they have got lost in The Chase wood. Alec swears he does not know where they are. The darkness and the silence of the wood becomes the witness of Alec seducing her. Tess is not strong enough to resist him. Tess's girlish purity is lost.

A few weeks after the night ride in The Chase, Tess leaves Trantridge and returns to Marlott, but Alec tries to persuade her by offering fine clothes and some gifts but Tess does not want to accept them. Her mother cannot compel her. She tries to understand her principle and her real life. Tess feels that she has a guilty feeling since she has broken a social law. When she comes back to her parents' house, many of her friends and neighbors hurt her feeling, but she tries not to pay attention to them.

Only the darkness and loneliness becomes her friends. In June, she gives a birth to a beautiful baby. Her family feels ashamed to see their daughter has committed a scandal. In the midnight, she has a good idea to baptize her baby and gives its name, Sorrow. Her baby dies in the early morning, and it is buried in far corner of the church yard, away from another graves. One fine spring, she works at Talbothays as a milkmaid. There she meets a man, who looks educated, thoughtful, gloomy, and different. Tess finally, knows that the man is Mr. Angel Clare, the youngest son of the vicar and they live at Emminster. Mr. Angel Clare is very talented, handsome, and never pays attention to any girls. He is twenty-six years old. He is so different from his two brothers who have entered the Cambridge University and the church as Angel has never done before. He kills his time by studying about business and farming. Day by day they become friends. Tess knows that he likes her better than the three girls: Retty, Izz Huet, and Marian. But in her mind, she feels sad if other man will marry her because she is not a virgin anymore. Tess feels that she has nothing to possess in life if she compares herself with the three girls and therefore, she has to give a chance to them. Angel tells her that he really loves her and wants to marry her. But Tess rejects his love. Angel continuously persuades Tess to be his wife. Finally, Tess accepts him to be her husband.

On the day of Christmas Eve, Tess and Angel go to Casterbridge to do some shopping. There, they meet two men and they praise her beauty. But one of them tells that she is not a virgin. Tess cannot forget and makes up her mind to write a letter to Angel informing him about the case. She puts the letter under the carpet near the door. Angel never finds it until their wedding day comes at the New Years

Eve. Fortunately, she finds the letter hidden under the carpet and she tore it. Tess is so anxious to talk to Angel and after they have arrived at a farm house near Wellridge Mill. In their wedding night, she admits that she has done wrong but Angel cannot forgive it. Tess cries and lays down on his knees and asks him to forgive her and tells him that she really loves him. She can do everything for the sake of Angel's love towards her. Tess tries to convince him that this sometimes occurs to other people, and no wonders if they marry happily. Angel replies her that different society has different manners and background of life. In the early morning, they decide to separate for a while. He says that Tess can write a letter to him if she is ill but not to come to him. He gives his address to her. Tess comes to her parents' house and tells them about this. They feel surprised to hear that and have been thinking she must be happily married. Her father is not sure if Tess has got married with Angel or not.

Meanwhile, Angel has decided to go to Brazil to look for a farm. After their marriage reaches almost a year, she decides to visit Angel's parents to know more about her husband and persuades him to come back to her. Unfortunately, she does not meet Angel's parents there, she only meets Alec whom she has converted. Tess actually hates Alec for his changing attitude. He persuades her to be his wife forever. Alec regards that her husband is not a good man because he lets her do the house-work and make her feeling in trouble. Alec cannot control himself and threatens her that she has become her master at once and again will be her master if Tess still loves Angel.

At midnight, Tess writes a letter in a passionate mood. In her letter, she says what she wants; if he comes to her or lets her come to visit him. Meanwhile, Angel has suffered from illness and anxiety when he hears her visiting his parents' house. This has brought a great effect to him because he does not know the story of the poor Tess. Shortly thereafter, Liza-Lu, her sister, tells that their mother feels seriously ill after their father gets drunk in the club. Being poor, Alec knows that right time for him to influence her. He pays everything for the family's needs. After her father's death, Tess write a letter informing him that she tries to forget what he has done to her. They have to go to Kingsbere because they neither have a house nor money. Meanwhile, Marian and Izz huet write a warning letter to Angel and tell him that Tess is looked for by Alec in the case of her love affairs towards Angel.

In a few days, Angel returns to Emminster and as soon as he arrives at The Herons Hotel, he meets Tess. Unfortunately, she does not like if Alec comes back to her. Tess blames Alec because he has destroyed her love towards Angel. Being frustrated, she stabs Alec with a knife in his bed and does not know what happened will be then. Not long after that, Tess comes to look for Angel and tells him everything she likes. Angel knows that his wife loves him so much. Finally, the police arrest her and she is put on the guillotine. Before she dies she tells Angel that she will be happy if Angel marries her sister, Liza-Lu.

THE ANALYSIS

As the introduction to the analysis of tragic effects of a stained woman in "Tess of the D'Urbervilles", the writer wants to give a concise description about the effects which happen to the main character, named Tess, after being stained. The case is considered important for the analysis itself relates to the British customs and habits at that time.

a. Rejected by Society

Having read the novel, the writer concludes that Tess, as the main character of the novel was living in the late nineteenth century. It would not be the case that by that time all the individuals and trades had disappeared, but they were under very great pressure, from two directions, first, internally, in the dominance of orthodox capitalist agriculture; second, externally, in the development of a manufacturing urban economy, which steadily cut out the more localized craftsmen. It is in these senses that capitalist structure of social relations were dominant. The characteristic structure was a class of tenant farmers and a class of landless labourers.

Tess, in this novel, has often been described as a 'peasant'. She, quit apart from the d'Urberville – Durbeyfield complication, is the daughter of a haggler. The working capital of this extreme marginal occupation is a horse. When it is killed, they nowhere to go but the labour market.

Tess takes employment to look after poultry. She has a double social irony: that it is on the 'little fancy farm', and that the poultry which are kept in old cottage. The owner of the 'little fancy farm' is the merchant family (the new d'Urberville) who has bought their way into the 'landed gentry'. And that the poultry which are kept in old cottage formerly was occupied by 'certain dusty copyholders who now lay east and west in the churchyard'. And now it turns into a fowl-house of Mrs. Stoke d'Urberville as soon as the property falls into hand according to 'law'.

Thus, Tess as a girl, begins at the nadir of the struggling intermediate class. And she is forced through the relatively light wage-labour of poultry and dairy work to the heavy work of the fields. She is in the special position of a woman labourer, for she works in a very different societal group. It makes her have many possibilities in seduction, marriage, desertion, and kept mistress. The limits and pressures of a declining intermediate group are then an intrinsic part of her history.

Tess is seen as being the main victim in this novel. She still remains either a symbol of her class, or only of a large section of society. But Tess may also be seen as a victim of a quite different societal group, because, for her own sex, she has subjected to the ill treatment and prejudices of a society.

Alec's perversion towards Tess leads us to the last and largest sense in which the problems of Tess may be seen as social ones. Because, she lives in a society which have known that she has stained by a man from middle-class. And for the result, she is pregnant. This situation makes the society thinks that she has done the thing against the Christianity's law. She has broken an accepted social law. It is in accordance with Terrence Wright's opinion in his book, *An Introductory to the Variety of Criticism "Tess of the d'Urbervilles"*;

“She had been made to break an accepted social law, but no law known to the environment in which she fancied herself such an anomaly”.
(Terrence Wright, 1987, p.56)

Tess realizes that it is her mistake for being stained because she does not know there is danger in a man. Moreover, her mother has never discussed about the matter before she goes to the d'Urbervilles family. Tess increasingly keeps herself apart from other people. She most fears what people think of her, and imagine that they talk constantly about her behind her back.

In fact she is not often discussed, and even her friends only think about her occasionally. They have other things which more important to do than thinking about her. She is sad because she imagines the society has rejected her for her mistakes.

When she gives birth to a baby, her old common sense comes back to her. She wants to be useful again. She only leaves her past behind and bravely steps outside in the day time and goes to help in the cornfields. She wants to be independent again. She is also brave enough feeding her baby in sight of other workers. Some of them continue to talk, but she tries not to pay attention to them.

Only her father who is really ashamed by Tess's scandal. He believes that Christianity rejects all stained women and their baby. Thus, he tries to hide Tess and her baby from the parson when her baby is dying. In Tess's problems of sexuality, Christianity appears to embody the conventional and unnatural, a function particularly seen in Tess's attitude to her baby. Her fears are induced by a cruelly twisted and unnatural theological system, and the priest that she consults about the baby's burial does little to alleviate her fears.

Hardy puts the final seal on his case against Christianity's unnatural cruelty when he tells that the child was buried “in the shabby corner of God's allotment where He lets the nettles grow, and where all anabaptized infants, notorious drunkards, suicides, and others of the conjecturally damned are laid.”(Thomas Hardy, p. 117)

It is obvious enough to say that Tess as a victim in this novel feels that the society has rejected her due to her wrong relationship with a wrong man, she feels guilty because of it. She feels, as if no other person who wants to be her friend anymore. She seemingly feels worried with some prejudices from her society. She is a person who does not have self-actualized. This kind of person, generally, does not have any respect for herself anymore. It makes her want to run away from her life by killing herself since she feels that she does not have a bright future anymore.

b. Rejected by the husband

In the fifth phase, Tess is called “The Woman Pays”. She has to pay first for her virginity to a man, who from his personal belief and from his class and age, feels himself licensed to take advantage of an innocent and pretty girl. There is, vividly, a realized sequence of contexts in which Tess is made to pay as a working-class woman for the desire of the middleclass males. Alec, actually is not wicked, despite his ‘stage villain’ appearance and he genuinely wants to help Tess. But he

does not want to leave a chance by seducing Tess. He feels that he is a victim of Tess's attraction, but Tess finds herself is a victim of her own beauty. It is in accordance with Terrence Wright's opinion about Tess;

"Alec in particular is inclined to see himself as a victim of Tess's attractions and more generally she finds herself a victim of her own beauty,...".
(Terrence Wright, 1987, p.8)

The ultimately more painful for Tess is the treatment of the other man that she love in her life. Angel Clare, sensitive and idealistic, would seem to be complete opposite of Alec, but his behaviour when Tess tells her secret is all too clear that he rejects her because she is not a virgin anymore. That is the reason why at the beginning she most fears to accept his love, and tries to hide her love towards Clare.

He refuses Tess because he has noticed that she is now, a different woman. In a sense, Angel's fault is that, in the case of the parson's son he has convinced him that women are ideal of purity. When this ideal of purity is punctured, it is too much for him to accept. This circumstance emphasizes that Angel, as a parson's son, has been reinforced by references to Christianity's belief that woman is ideal of purity. It can be seen in Terrence Wright's opinion;

"This simple duality emphasizes the crushing duality of his own, and other men's, thinking on women, and it has already been reinforced by ironic references to Christianity's archetypal presentation of Woman – the Garden of Eden"
(Terrence Wright, 1987, p.7)

It is Angel's misfortune to be unable to get the virgin from his wife. He has no life between elevation of Tess as an embodiment of purity, and total rejection of her as an entirely different woman.

For Clare, sex and nature are assigned to the female, and intellect and culture to the male. Angel's flagrant towards Tess can be seen in the wedding-night 'confession', and primarily, it is the lost of faith of Angel to Tess. Angel Clare's dilemma is compound primarily of elements given a historical and social location; the difficulties of class transition, the confrontation of liberal education and Christian faith. In other case, Tess is trapped in mutually reinforcing economic and sexual oppression. But still, the source of what is specifically tragic in her story remains at the level of nature. That is the reason why Tess is identified with nature.

CONCLUSION

Before completing this writing, it is necessary for the writer to draw a conclusion on "The Tragic Effects of a stained woman in Tess of the D'Urbervilles".

"Tess of The D'Urbervilles" is one of Thomas Hardy's novel which tellsthe readers about he young country girl, named Tess, who is stained because of her

foolishness and her innocence, and as the effects, she has to feel that her society rejects her. Her husband also rejects her because he never thinks that Tess can do the amoral thing.

In the novel it can be seen that Alec feels himself as the victim of Tess's attraction. That is the reason why he seduces and stains her. Tess also realizes that her beauty is the source of the seduction. Finally, she tries to make as ugly as possible in order to avoid men's attraction on the road.



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