

# How Thomas Hardy Unfolds His Tragic Consciousness Technically in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

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**Abstract**—*Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is one of Thomas Hardy's most famous tragic novels, in which he gives a vivid description of a tragic story about a very pretty rural girl who is seduced by one man, deserted by the other and convicted to be hanged for stabbing the former in order to get the true love from the latter. Thomas Hardy is very good at looking at life in a tragic way and describing the human suffering in the tragic sentiment and a unique manner. In the novel, Thomas Hardy tries his ways to unfold his tragic consciousness thematically and technically so as to make the readers sense and share it throughout the whole book. In this paper, I will explore how he employs the perfect structure of the novel and other writing techniques to exaggerate the atmosphere of tragedy, profoundly portray the personality of the characters and their inner world, intensify the writer's tragic consciousness and sharply criticize the hypocrisy of the morality and religion in the capitalist society.

**Keywords**— *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Tragic Consciousness, Structure, foreshadowing, symbolism.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) is one of the greatest rustic novelists as well as a great poet in English literature. Some critics think that Hardy's standing as a novelist has grown to eclipse everyone in the nineteenth century except Dickens, and some even regard him as 'Shakespeare in English fiction'. He is very good at describing the human suffering especially female characters in a tragic sentiment and a unique manner. Many heroines in his novels have a strong personality and an outstanding character, and at the same time they have thrilling power of tragedies. *Tess of*

*the D'Urbervilles* is one of his most famous tragic novels.

The publication of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* has ever caused a stir in England. Some critics have denounced it as 'an extremely disgusting story told in an extremely disgusting way'; but at the same time, it also won the spiritual praise of *the Times*, regarding it as Hardy's best work. From the two opposite comments, we can make a conclusion that the success of the novel results from not only the shocking story but also the unique writing techniques, that is, Hardy's tragic consciousness pervades the whole novel both thematically and technically. It is so seeming that the author employs many unique techniques such as foreshadowing and symbolism to describe most of the big events or scenes in the novel, at the same time, he achieves the theme of tragedy through structure very well. Hardy is, doubtlessly, a true great tragedian in the history of English fiction, he has given to the novel a simple grandeur and impressiveness, but the more impressive for his preoccupation with the concerns of common and humble people: There is increasing gravity and grandeur in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, that is why the novel has a profoundly stirring tragic power. This paper is going to explore how Hardy elaborately adopts some effective writing methods to unfold his tragic consciousness in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

## II. HOW THOMAS HARDY UNFOLDS TRAGIC CONSCIOUSNESS TECHNICALLY

### 2.1 Achieving through structure

By structure I mean to say that in order to create a vivid picture of Tess and endow her with the charming quality as a human being Hardy does his best to make the structure

of the novel as perfect as possible. Hardy's own techniques and emphasis, as opposed to generic qualities of tragedy, gave Tess its special aura. For nearly the entire novel the protagonist Tess is notable not for being fixed in resolve but for adaptability to new conditions and to fresh tests of purity, suggesting that Tess begins really to exist as a tragic character.

When analyzing the whole structure of the novel we find that the climax of the novel is the time when Angel returned from abroad and still cherished love for her and Tess realizes that unless she regains him she will not have another chance. And she decides to do all that is necessary to have that moment and to risk all in order to achieve a brief period of fulfillment of life. Therefore, all the previous actions only serve as a prelude to this moment. The long process of the plot development produces a strong effect of intense feelings and suspense and readers will not move their attentions away from the ups and downs of the fate of the characters in the novel. What Hardy does is to shape and heighten the personality of the tragic sufferer throughout the novel by creating a full portrait of her possibilities of experience.

Another aspect of the structure lies in the creation of Tess as the main protagonist. Tess is shaped by a context suggestive of universals as well as specific and transitory features. Tess's special quality is emphasized continuously through intermittent reminders, such as Tess as 'visionary essence of woman' earlier she had been the 'standard woman'. In both of these there is the blending of Tess as one against whom others are measured, and of Tess as the average. As 'a visionary essence of woman--a whole sex condensed into one typical form', Tess is intended to suggest the tragic extremism of individuality. As a woman, Tess's stature, her moral and spiritual magnitude are heightened especially in the way she forgives Angel instinctively and wordlessly as compared with the intellectual, unfeeling way Angel will not forgive Tess. The situation at Talbothays allows Hardy to develop his concept of specialness amidst ordinariness most fully. Tess is initially indistinguishable to Angel from the other dairy maids and their love for Angel is a contrast between civilization and nature. Their deportment gives them a resignation, a dignity which is a tragic concept. At the same time Tess is steadily made to rise out of the

background, this marks her as superior to the other dairy maids, though in the eyes of propriety she is less worthy of him than them. To Angel, she seems to be more than human in her beauty and he compares her to various Greek goddess. And 'She seems to be the embodiment of life'. Before the revelation, in Angel's eyes, 'She is a lady, nevertheless-in feeling and nature', and she appears as the essence of femaleness.

Hardy elevates Tess by remarking that Tess is one whose price is far above rubies. In considering what Tess was not, he (Angel) overlooked what she was, and forgot that the defective can be more than the entire. Correspondingly, the subtitle of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is 'A Pure Woman Faithfully Represented'. In Alec's eyes, Tess is one girl who remains pure despite her 'fall'. In her letter to Angel, Tess tells him she is the same woman he felt in love with at the dairy, the same one who has loved him and been faithful to him throughout his absence. Angel's horror of Alec's death is mixed with his knowledge of the strength of Tess's love for him. All Hardy does is to distinguish Tess from the common folk around her, especially against those who are evil as Alec and hurting as Angel, thus making her larger than life with a more powerful tragic effect.

Hardy has made Tess more than a purely and limitedly naturalistic tragic heroine. By providing her with an uncontrollable mystic potential, Hardy associates Tess with considerations larger than herself, with a conception of existence that highlights a unique individuality, an individuality which, although it can be elevated to the unity of mysticism, remains deeply bound with the sensuous perceptiveness and responsiveness of the person experiencing the feeling. These two qualities coalesce in the famous description of Tess walking across a disused portion of the garden in order to hear better Angel's harp:

*She went stealthily as a cat through this profusion of growth, gathering cuckoo spittle on her skirts, cracking snails that were underfoot, staining her hands with thistle milk and slug slime, and rubbing off upon her naked arms sticky blights which, though snow-white on the apple tree trunks, made madder stains on her skin; thus she drew quite near to Angel, still unobserved of him.*

*Tess was conscious of neither time nor space. The exaltation, which she had described as being producible at will by gazing at a star came now without any determination of hers; she undulated upon the thin notes of the second-hand harp, and their harmonies passed like breezes through her, bringing tears into her eyes. The flowing pollen seemed to be his notes made visible, and the dampness of the garden the weeping of the garden's sensibility. Though near nightfall, the rank-smelling weed-flowers glowed as if they would not close, for intentness, and the waves of color mixed with the waves of sound. (Tess p.121) [1]*

The 'seemings' of the garden are impressions--sharp and evocative but with indefinable significance beyond their communication of the intensity of Tess's feeling. She identifies intimately with her sensuous knowledge, and she genuinely becomes the totality of her experiences of sense. In all the message is that the force of this connection between Tess and the natural world is to suggest the 'mad' passion and the non-ethical quality of her sensibility. So far, Hardy intellectualizes to a striking degree the groundwork for the kind of tragedy that is developed. Once this groundwork is established, he relies on structure for the emotional impact. So the section on Talbothays is extended as far as it is. Without this leisurely developed expense, the later starker events would be less shocking, less disturbing in their implications of the limited possibilities of existence, and the horror later on would carry less weight.

At the end of the section at Talbothays, characterizations have been established. From this point the tone shifts substantially. The first half of the book portrays the conflict between society and nature on a fairly straightforward level; the second half fulfils the direst possibilities of the first half in a way that emphasizes the artificiality of society. In other words, Angel's hypocrisy and his acceptance of the double standard morality impel the events of the second half. The conventions of society are so well accepted that Tess herself scarcely seriously attacks his hypocrisy. The first part shows how thoroughly these conventions are embodied in day-to-day life and implies that they are pliable, open to humane modification; the second half depicts these conventions in their virulence present in Angel in a perverse, blind fashion, colored by

the shading imagery of Flintcomb-Ash and Stonehenge and Projected in the wanderings of Tess. Contrary to her essential voluntary changes of location in the first of the novel, in the second half she is driven from point to point by all the disadvantages against her. In the first half Tess is trying to reestablish her virginity; while in the second half her own feelings and beliefs combine with those of her society to give her new options of self-fulfillment until finally, in bitter desperation, she insists upon self-fulfillment above all other possibilities.

Several patterns, as the influence of Tess's past on her present, the opposition between the countryside and the urban society, the opposition between human instincts and contemporary morality, developed over the length of the novel are drawn upon again. For example, Tess responds to Angel's presence at Sandbourne and his queries with 'It is too late!'; 'Too late, too late!'; 'But I say, I say, it is too late!' This iteration helps make Hardy's point that the novel is structured on time--on past and present, on rural against modern urban, on timeless behavior against temporal morality, on Tess as rural woman and modern. As it had so often before, Tess's dreamlike condition occurs again in the last phase of the novel, with particularly miserable results. When Angel first sees Tess in Sandbourne, she feels like a fugitive in a dream.

## **2.2 Achieving through foreshadowing**

Hardy employs many techniques in the making of the novel to express his tragic consciousness about the life in Victorian society successfully, one of which is foreshadowing. It refers to a kind of anticipation that the readers have when they try to understand what will happen in the future development of the plot. Most of the scenes and actions in the novel are foreshadowed in the novel. Two kinds of foreshadowing are found to be put into use. They are action foreshadowing and non-action foreshadowing.

### **2.2.1 Action foreshadowing**

From the first phase of the Tess's life as previously mentioned the reader is led to anticipate the tragedy of Tess. The story of the killing of a beautiful white hart and the mention of 'murderess' foreshadows the tragedy, which is about to begin. Tess is like the beautiful white hart for various reasons. This makes Alec D'Urberville keep hunting her. He finds what Tess cares most about, using it

to weaken her resolve. He takes advantage of her family economic poverty and her defenselessness. He seduces her and makes her a fallen woman. Tess left him and married Angel but is rejected for her liaison with Alec. When Alec happens to meet Tess a second time by sheer chance, he continues to pursue her ruthlessly until he finally becomes her 'master' again. Finally, Tess kills Alec and is cornered like the beautiful white hart and hanged. She has thought herself as a murderess when their horse dies, indeed she does become a murderess. Tess's being a murderess is foreshadowed again in Chapter 51. On the day before they are moving out of Marlott, Alec comes again to help them. He tells Tess who has just heard the sound of a carriage, though none is nearby-the legend of the D'Urbervilles coach.

*"It is that this sound of a non-existent coach can only be heard by one of D'Urberville blood, and it is held to be of ill-omen to the one who hears it. It has to do with a murder, committed by one of the family, centuries ago."*

*"Now you have begun it, finish it."*

*"Very well. One of the families is said to have abducted some beautiful woman, who tried to escape from the coach in which he was carrying her off, and in the struggle he killed her--or she killed him--I forget which. Such is one version of tale"* (Tess, p.348) [1]

The story of the abduction, of course, mirrors Tess's own story: She is seduced, if not actually abducted, and in the end she does murder her seducer.

In a similar manner Tess's pregnancy and marrying a gentleman is strongly foreshadowed. When Tess's parents go to Rolliver's inn to have a drink and talk about their plan for Tess, one of the elderly boozers in a undertone observes "But Joan D'Urbeyfield must mind that she don't get green malt in floor." (Tess, p.22) [1] (To get green malt in floor means to become pregnant). The next morning Tess and her younger brother Abraham have to set out for market because their father hasn't recovered from the heavy drink. On the way, Abraham says: "But you be glad that you're going to marry a gentleman? And you would have been a rich lady ready-made, and not have to be made by marrying a gentleman?" (Tess, p.26) [1]

What the elderly boozers observe in an undertone in

Rolliver's inn and Abraham says foreshadows what happens later. Tess does get pregnant by Alec outside marriage yet he was not a gentleman. Later when she is glad to marry a gentleman, Angel, she is not a 'lady' but a fallen woman. She isn't made a rich lady by marrying a gentleman, instead she gets deserted and she isn't happy at all.

Another example of foreshadowing of subtle hints that she gets pregnant comes in when Tess leaves Alec and begins to make her way back home. The narrator says, "She had no fear of him now; and in the cause of her confidence her sorrow lay" (Tess, p.26) [1] Later in the novel she names the baby Sorrow.

The heroine's death is also foreshadowed several times. The reader can sense the coming of it. Each time it can be felt nearer and nearer. On her way from home to Flintcom-Ash Tess sleeps out in the woods, because of her misery, she is in fact thinking of her own death, wishing that it might come soon. When she sees the birds in pain, she is seized with remorse and thinks of their plight much worse than hers, and she decides to put them out of their misery. In Victorian times, hunting was a pastime for the upper classes, which frequently made special trips to estates in hunting season. The plight of the pheasants, however, is actually analogous to hers. The birds have been shot and horribly wounded by hunters. These hunters are parallel to Alec D'Urbervilles, who goes to his mother's estate (which is full of birds) to 'hunt' for young women to seduce. The parallel is underscored by the fact that the seduction took place in the woods in autumn, just as the hunting does. The birds serve simultaneously as a reminder and a foreshadowing of Tess's fate: She has been "wounded," emotionally speaking, and she sometimes longs for the merciful death she gives to the birds.

As Tess hurries back to Flintcomb-Ash from a vain visit to Angel's parents, Alec requires Tess to swear on an evil stone and she agrees. Meeting a shepherd Tess asks him if that odd, cross-like pillar really is an ancient crucifix. The shepherd, horrified at her misinformation, tells her that it's not a Holy Cross but 'a thing of ill-omen,' erected to commemorate the hanging place of an evil man who sold his soul to the devil. The act of swearing on an evil stone foreshadows Tess' death by hanging.

After the death of her father they have to leave

Marlot. When they move to Kingsburge the next day, they learn that their lodgings have been rented to someone else. Another moment of foreshadowing occurs when the Durbeyfields leave their belongings in the churchyard, near the tombs of their ancestors. Tess meets Alec and sends him away again but Tess wishes that she herself were dead, and we fear, rightly, that this may indeed soon be her fate.

### 2.2.2 Non-action foreshadowing

Non-action foreshadowing like the action foreshadowing takes a very important role in creating a gloomy sense for the novel. In the novel, the non-action foreshadowing is used in dealing with wet days. For this weather phenomenon usually puts people into a sad emotion and even makes them sentimental. Hardy successfully takes this natural phenomenon to foreshadow some of the events and thus it infancies greatly the tragic consciousness in the novel.

As we read through the novel, we find that rain foreshadows almost all big events. Though it does not rain on the Lady Day when they move from Marlot, it does rain the day before. Alec comes in the rain and Tess learns from him the legend of the D'Urbervilles coach, which foreshadows Tess as a murderess in the end. Two months after her arrival at Talbothays Tess, with Marian, Retty and Izz find their road to church flooded after the rain. Angel appears and carries each of them over, telling Tess he felt most for her. But they both try not to show their feelings before other girls. Later Angel carries Tess across a flooded river after rain in his sleepwalking and puts her in an 'empty stone coffin of an abbot', which is a shadow of the death of Tess at the close of the book.

It was raining when the newlywed Tess and Angel's luggage finally arrives and they are told that the delay is caused by the misfortunes of the three milkmaids in their despair at Angel's leaving. The milkmaids are put into great misery and despair foreshadows Tess's own misfortunes and suffering after Angel deserts her and leaves for Brazil.

When Tess arrives at Flintcomb-Ash tired and worn out she resolves to stay, 'particularly as it began to rain'. Her cheek is 'red and moist with the drizzle'. Here on this starved acre she has to work on in the lavishing rain and 'feel the creep of the rain-water', 'till the leaden light

diminishes and marks that the sun is down'. The rain foreshadows her future hard experience on the farm.

There are many other examples of foreshadowing of one sort or another throughout the book, and they do increase the book's power. "Their effect, generally, is on the one hand to create an appropriate atmosphere for the narrative that is to come, and on the other, to make the reader feel. When he realizes that an event is a fulfillment of something already prefigured a sense of the inevitability of the story." [2]

### 2.3 Achieving through symbolism

The abundant use of symbolism is a common stylistic trait shared by many Victorian writers particularly. Hardy definitely surpassed every novelist of his age in quantity and skill. Symbolism in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* tends to be taken particularly from nature. The various symbols taken from nature intensify the cruelty of natural laws, and they foreshadow the fate of the main characters. Surely, Hardy is bitterly aware of this point. Symbols from nature can be discussed from the following levels:

#### 2.3.1 Symbols of animals

As far as symbols of animals are concerned, Hardy connects his characters with various animals. The animal symbols connected with Tess are predominantly those of birds and mice. Their significance varies, but implication points to human happiness or suffering.

Tess's early tragedy teaches her 'the serpent hisses where the sweet birds sing'. Nature's indifference to her suffering is reflected in the song of birds. When she rallies and sets off for Talbothays, her zest for life is heard in every bird's note. Happy bird-song is rarely heard, however, again at Marlot until Tess and her family has left.

*With the impulse of a soul who could feel for kindred sufferers as much as for herself, Tess's first thought was to put the still living birds out of their torture, and to this end with her own hands she broke the necks of as many as she could find, leaving them to lie where she had found them till the gamekeepers should come-as they probably would come-to look for them a second time.*

*'Poor darlings-to suppose myself the most miserable being on earth in the sight o' such misery as yours!' she exclaimed, her tears running down as she killed the birds tenderly. 'And I be not bleeding; and I have*



*two hands to feed and clothe me.’ She was ashamed of herself for her gloom of the night, based on nothing more tangible than a sense of condemnation under an arbitrary law of society which had no foundation in Nature. (Tess, p.274) [1]*

This is a description of the scene when Tess, on her way to Flintcomb-Ash, sleeps in the woods and must mercy-kill the birds left behind by the hunters. The birds are clearly parallel to Tess, and the scene itself--in which Tess sleeps out of doors, on the ground--is parallel to that in which she is raped by Alec D'Urberville. Her killing the birds symbolizes that she, too, is like a wounded bird who will have to be put out of her misery--and indeed, when she does die at the end of the book by hanging, which would break her neck, just as she breaks the birds' necks. The birds principally associated with Tess indicate suffering of intensity. Their agony is the result of the cruelty and indifference of both man and nature, and emphasizes a 'harshness' which is 'universal', and of which Tess is the victim. The birds' symbolism used for Tess successfully brings out her essential tragedy. Certainly, the shooting party represents the brutality of nature, the uncaring, wanton and random action of natural processes. And the graphic bird-shooting scene could be read as embodying the viciousness of the natural world. Her comparison to the birds indicates her unity with nature, identifying the birds as sharers of her own sufferings.

Similarly, as the work is finishing in Chapter 48 "The time for the rat catching arrived at last, and the hunt began. The creatures had crept downwards with the subsidence of the rick till they were all together at the bottom, and being now uncovered from their last refuge they ran across the open ground in all directions," and even "men unconnected with the threshing sometimes drop in...gents with terriers and facetious pipes, roughs with sticks and stones", [1] finally the rats are driven from the straw and killed. The rat is an image, which has something in common with Tess, and rat-catching symbolizes Alec's persecution of Tess.

Symbols from nature form an 'animal world', according to Frye, "The animal world is portrayed in terms of monsters or beast prey, which from Shakespeare to Hardy has been associated with tragic destiny..." [3]

### 2.3.2 Symbols of colors

Symbols of colors in Tess are equally important. The colors in the novel unfold before us a bleak world, and they create part of the novel's poetic force. From the beginning of the novel, Tess is portrayed repeatedly as a 'white', most likely symbolizing her innocence and purity. At the May-Day dance she is wearing a white gown and carrying white flowers, and significantly this is our first introduction to her as a character. Shortly after, the narrator says, "This white shape stood apart by the hedge alone". And then later, the narrator comments "The lane showed all its white features, and Tess showed hers, still white". And red is most often the color that contrasts this white in the novel.

For an artist as visually sensitive as Hardy, color is of the first importance and significance, and there is one color which literally catches the eye, and is meant to catch it, throughout the book. This color is red, the color of blood, which is associated with Tess from first to last. It dogs her, disturbs her, and destroys her. She is full of it, she spills it, and she loses it. Watching Tess's life we begin to see that her destiny is nothing more or less than the color red. [4]

Red is usually associated with blood and love, with lust and sex, and with emotion. When the horse is accidentally stabbed, Tess runs up to him and attempts to cover the hole with her hands while getting 'splashed from face to skirt with the crimson drops'. Tess tries to stop the flow of Prince's blood with her hand but to no avail. She turns pale, almost white, which symbolizes not only her shock but also her innate purity.

*"The huge pool of blood in front of her was already assuming the iridescence of coagulation; and when the sun rose a hundred prismatic hues were reflected from it" (Tess, p.27) [1]*

Blood symbolizes not only death but also 'a hundred prismatic hues' of existence. As Tess continues her journey we shall see that these 'hues' include a series of opposites: life and death, violence and tender love, fertility and destruction. Color red and the image of blood can represent things and emotions that initially appear worlds apart.

The reader will remember the image of Prince's blood when he reads about the discovery of Alec's death in Chapter 56. Besides this certain farm machines that

threaten the agrarian way of life are painted red, as is the mansion of Alec D'Urbervilles. Blood red can also be a positive image in Hardy's world: Tess's health and vitality are reflected in her ruddy cheeks, and the sun, so necessary to life, is often described as red.

Moving ahead to her first experience with Alec, the red imagery is overly abundant. First, he feeds her strawberries and 'held it by the stem to her mouth'. Although she rejects him at first, she then consents as she does often as the novel progresses. Then they head over to the rose tree where 'he gathered blossoms and gave her to put in her bosom. She obeyed like one in a dream, and when she could affix no more he himself tucked a bud or two into her hat'(Chapter 5). This whole scene certainly set up the action to come. One last image is at the end of this same scene: 'In looking downward a thorn of the rose remaining in her breast accidentally pricked her chin'. (Tess, p.38) [1]. Through all of these different red images, it seemed pretty obvious that something bad was going to happen to her, as her white image was being tainted with all of the red.

At Flintcomb-Ash the thresher is red, symbolizing its brutal destructiveness. Hardy calls it a 'tyrant' that the girls must slavishly serve. The nameless man who drives the thresher is indifferent to the land and to these hardworking people. He's a frightening symbol of how the countryside is becoming controlled by faceless, alien individuals who work solely for money.

### 2.3.3 Symbols of fire

For the symbols of fire we should look at the description of the hearth and fire in Chapter 34. At first it's lowing and inviting, as in a happy home. By the time the farmhand has delivered his news and left, the embers are beginning to die. The fire symbolizes the passion between Angel and Tess, which is dying because too many strange things are happening around them and because they have been dishonest with each other. The fire will take on an even more sinister appearance in the next chapter, after Tess confesses the fire is completely out and can't be stirred to life with Angel's poker. The characters themselves are described as 'ashes of their former fires.' Hardy seems to be suggesting that passion is fueled by illusion rather than by truth.

### 2.3.4. Symbols of other objects

In order to achieve his artistic effects Hardy also uses other symbols of natural objects in the novel. Look at the following sentence:

*The basket was heavy and the bundle was large, but she lugged them long like a person who didn't trod her special burden in material things.* (Tess, p.73) [1]

The heavy basket and the large bundle, like many objects in Tess, have a symbolic meaning. They symbolize how Tess feels about her life. Like the basket, she's laden down with "baggage": Emotionally, she is weighted down with guilt, shame, and failure; physically, she is carrying Alec's child in her womb. Still look at another example:

*Tess had never visited this part of the country. And yet she felt akin to the landscape. Not so very far to the left of her she could discern a dark patch in the scenery, which inquiry confirmed her in supposing to be trees marking the environs of Kingshere-in the church of which parish the Bones of her ancestors-her useless ancestors-lay entombed'* (Tess, p.101) [1]

The narrator is describing Tess's reactions as she walks to her new employment at Talbothays Dairy. A number of important themes invoked here. First, Tess is described as 'akin to the landscape.' Tess's identification with her setting-the land she lives in-is very important within the book, and she and the land reflect each other throughout. There is a 'dark patch' in this landscape, and it is the tomb of her ancestors. It is particularly significant that this stain derives from the tomb of her ancestors. Tess concerns her descent from an ancient and fallen family is a circumstance that lies at the root of all of Tess's troubles. In fact, every decision and sacrifice Tess makes is for her family's benefit; hence, it seems only natural that family, past and present, should form the foundation of her downfall. The novel opens with Parson Tringham, 'the antiquary,' and his explanation of Jack Durbeyfield's connection with the ancient line of D'Urberville. Involving no money, land, or power, the D'Urberville name is useless. But its mystique gives the dissipated Jack a reason to celebrate ostentatiously and sets the wheel of Tess's fate spinning forward. It is their mighty connections--and the tangible rewards they hope it brings--that prompt the Durbeyfields to send Tess to "claim kin" with the

Stoke-D'Urberville family of Trantridge. If we read the landscape as representing Tess, this "dark patch" symbolizes the moral stain of her loss of virginity.

In Angel's zest and gaiety he hangs a bough of mistletoe over their bed. The mistletoe is a symbol of both romance and pagan lust, but Tess tells Angel that she thinks of killing herself under the mistletoe over their bed (Chapter 35) and it dries up over the weeks that follow their marriage. Eventually, in Chapter 40 Angel crushes it under his feet.

*Soon the light was strong, and a ray shone upon her unconscious form, peering under her eyelids and waking her.*

'What is it, Angel?' she said, starting up. 'Have they come for me?'

'Yes, dearest,' he said. 'They have come.'

'It is as it should be,' she murmured. 'Angel, I am almost glad-yes, glad! This happiness could not have lasted. It was too much. I have had enough; and now I shall not live for you to despise me!'

*She stood up, shook herself, and went forward, neither of the men having moved.*

'I am ready,' she said quietly. (Tess, p.388) [1]

This is a description of Tess's capture by the police at Stonehenge. Throughout the novel, Hardy constructs a correspondence between Tess's situation and the state of the natural world around her. Here, however, she is caught at dawn--generally thought of as a time of hope and promise. This fact could be read as one of Hardy's touches of irony, but Tess's words about being glad and of hope usually symbolized by dawn are not out of place here. Tess is tired of her suffering, and the brief idyll she has had with Angel--the second honeymoon, as it were--has made her happy. She is now ready to die, happily.

The use of symbolism from nature is one of Hardy's chief means of showing the relationship between man and his natural environment; it sets off the environment where main characters live by contrast and foreshadows the tragic fate of the main characters.

### III. CONCLUSION

*Tess of the D'Urbervilles* was one of Hardy's great novels. The story could not have taken place without the background of Victorian Age, and therein lays its tragedy

and its beauty. There is a doom that hangs over the novel from the very first chapter, and Hardy's mastery is in not dragging it down to stark tragedy, but in maintaining 'a rhythm of action in which a period of hopefulness or actual well-being in the world is followed by increasing difficulty and then decline or catastrophe'[5] which brings us to the last chapter uplifted, only to be cast down into the depths of sadness.

*Tess of the D'Urbervilles* was written as a result of the close observation of his time and sense of tragedy in human life on the part of the author. Hardy in his EXPLANATORY NOTE TO THE FIRST EDITION of 1891 wrote, "the story is sent out in all sincerity of purpose, as an attempt to give artistic form to a true sequence of things",[6] which offers the world a tragically colored picture--an epitome of the suffering of the wronged women of Victorian Age.

So, I drew the conclusion that *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* as a tragic novel shows Hardy's tragic consciousness both thematically and technically. Technically, Hardy succeeds in employing so many unique skills in increasing the tragic atmosphere for the novel. The color red, birds and rats all serve as very essential and significant symbolic function for the novel. Hardy's technique of achievement of tragedy through structure also helps to create a profound tragic consciousness. The skills of foreshadowing helps to place the readers into a certain gloomy and hopeless scene. It is not exaggerated that the writing techniques play a very important part in Hardy's successfully showing his tragic consciousness and attracting readers to love this work.

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