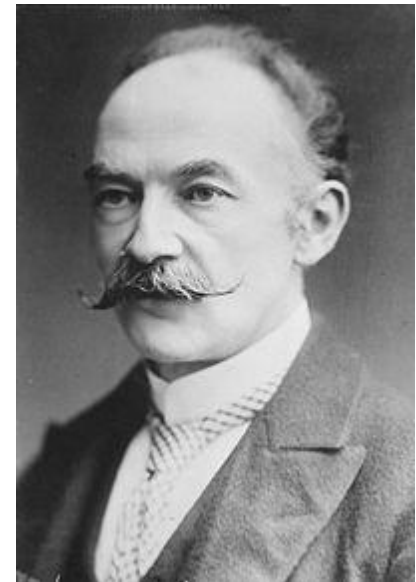


Thomas Hardy and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

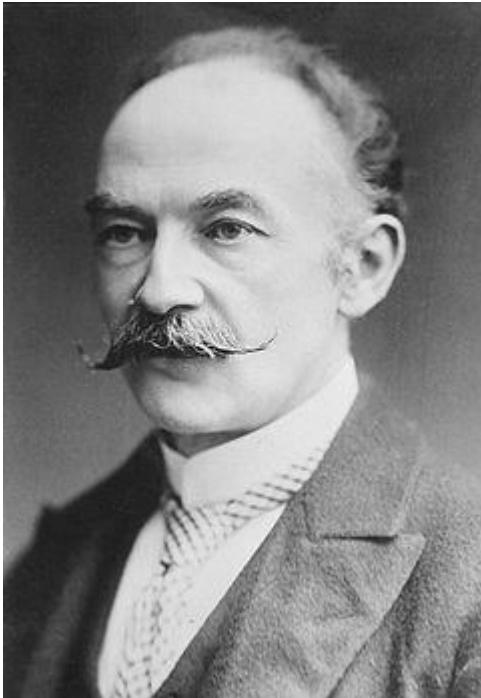
- Thomas Hardy was an English novelist, short story writer, and poet of the naturalist movement, though he saw himself as a poet and wrote novels mainly for financial gain only.



Tess of the D'Urbervilles



Thomas Hardy: a transitional writer



- **Born:** 1840 (1840-06-02)
Stinsford, Dorchester, Dorset, England
- **Died:** 1928 (1928-01-12) (aged 87)
Dorchester, Dorset, England
- **Occupation** Novelist, Poet, and Short Story writer
- **Literary movement:** Naturalism
- **Spouse(s)**
Emma Lavinia Gifford (1874-1912)
Florence Dugdale (1914-28)

Thomas Hardy: Biographical information

- **Family information:** was born near Dorchester, His father (Thomas) worked as a stonemason and local builder. His mother Jemima was well-read and educated Thomas until he went to his first school at Bockhampton at age eight.
- **Education:** a family of Hardy's social position lacked the means for a university education, and his formal education ended at the age of 16 when he became apprenticed to John Hicks, a local architect. But architecture was not his desired profession. Soon he was writing poetry, when he failed, he began to write novels.



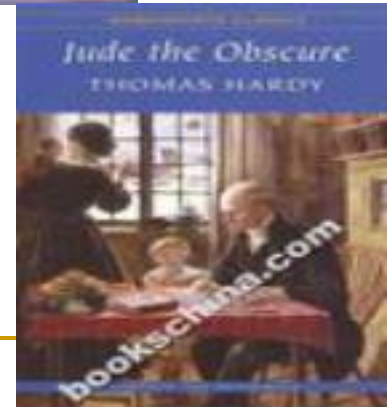
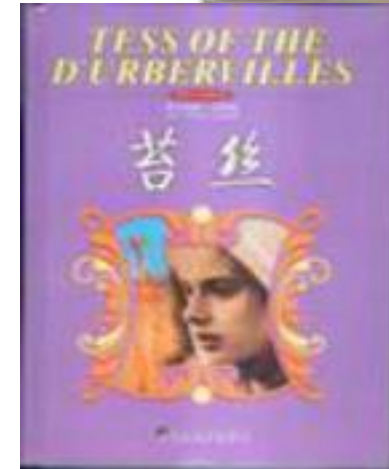
- Marriage: in 1874 Hardy fell in love with Emma Lavinia Gifford and got married. Although he later became estranged from his wife, who died in 1912, her death had a traumatic effect on him.
- 1914, Hardy married his secretary Florence Emily Dugdale, who was 39 years his junior.
- Death: he died of cold in 1928, and his ashes were placed in Westminster Abbey, but his heart was buried with his first wife in Dorset.



Resting place of Thomas Hardy's heart at Stinsford parish church

Hardy's major works

- ❑ *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874)
- ❑ 远离尘嚣
- ❑ *The Return of the Native* (1878)
- ❑ 还乡
- ❑ *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886)
- ❑ 卡斯乔斯特市长
- ❑ *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891)
- ❑ 德伯家的苔丝
- ❑ *Jude the Obscure* (1895)
- ❑ 无名的裘得



Hardy's main concerns

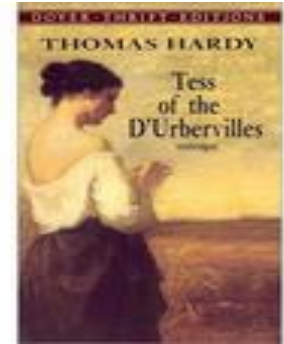
- Hardy portrayed characters, in his native Dorset, **struggling helplessly against their passions and external conflicts.**
- Occasionally the fate of the individual is altered by chance, but **the human will lose when it challenges necessity.**



- Through intense, vivid descriptions of the heath, the fields, the seasons, and the weather, **Wessex attains a physical presence in the novels and acts as a mirror of the psychological conditions and the fortunes of the characters.**
- These fortunes Hardy views with irony and sadness.



Tess of the D'Urbervilles



- Published in 1891
- Considered one of Hardy's greatest works, but was controversial during its time
- The striking feature: **critical realism and naturalism:**
 - ①. critical realism: attack on the hypocritical morality of the bourgeois society and the capitalist invasion into the country
 - ②. Naturalism: Hardy portrays Tess as an individual whose fate is already set, "Plaything of the gods" - so much of her life is beyond her control

Major characters



- **Tess Durbeyfield** — The protagonist, eldest daughter in a poor rural working family; a fresh, well-developed country girl who looks markedly more mature than she is. Tess has a keen sense of responsibility and is committed to doing the best she can for her family.
- **Angel Clare** — The third son of a clergyman; Tess's husband and true love. He considers himself a freethinker, but his notions of morality turn out to be fairly conventional: he rejects Tess on their wedding night when she confesses that she isn't a virgin, even though he, too, has engaged in premarital sex. He works at the Talbothay's dairy to gain practical experience because he hopes to buy a farm of his own.

-
- **Alec Stoke-d'Urberville** — The libertine son of Simon Stokes and Mrs. d'Urberville. He either rapes or seduces Tess when she is no more than sixteen or seventeen years old, and later pursues her relentlessly. He persuades her to see the reality in her relationship with Angel and convinces her to become his mistress.
 - **Jack Durbeyfield (Sir John d'Urberville)** — Tess's father, a carter in Marlott (based on the Dorset village of Marnhull) who is a lazy alcoholic. When he learns that his family is descended from nobility, he works less and less and starts pretending that he is an aristocrat.
 - **Joan Durbeyfield** — Tess's hardworking mother who has a practical outlook on life. This includes being prepared to use her daughter for her own gains.
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Minor characters



- **James Clare** — A charitable and moral clergyman; Angel Clare's father.
 - **Mrs. Clare** — Angel Clare's mother, a kindly woman. She wants Angel to marry a pure, virtuous, and true Christian woman.
 - **Eliza Louisa (Liza-Lu) Durbeyfield** — Tess's younger sister, who closely resembles her. Shortly before her arrest, Tess asks Angel to marry her. Tess says she has "all the best of me, and none o' the bad".
 - **Sorrow** — The illegitimate child of Tess and Alec who lives only a few weeks. Tess loves him, despite her painfully ambivalent feelings about the circumstances of his conception. She christens him herself on the night he dies.
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Structure of the novel



- Phase the First: The Maiden (1-11) 白壁无瑕
- Phase the Second: Maiden No More (12-15) 陷淖沾泥
- Phase the Third: The Rally (16-24) 旗鼓重整
- Phase the Fourth: The Consequence (25-34) 兰因絮果
- Phase the Fifth: The Woman Pays (35-44) 痴心女子
- Phase the Sixth: The Convert (45-52) 冤家路狭
- Phase the Seventh: Fulfilment (53-59) 功成愿满

Main idea

- Tess is a beautiful, innocent peasant girl. The poverty of the family forces her to claim kinship with the sham but rich d'Urbervilles.
- Alec, the young master of the d'Urbervilles, seduces Tess and impregnates her.
- Tess returns home and gives birth to a baby, who dies soon. People's opinion forces Tess to leave home to work on a dairy farm.



- There she meets Angel Clare. They two fall in love with each other. On the wedding night, Angel makes a confession about his past dissipation and is readily forgiven by Tess, but when Tess reveals her own past, Angel just wouldn't forgive her and deserts her that very night.
- Hopeless and helpless, Tess has to wander from place to place, doing the hardest work and bearing the harshest insult.
- When her father's death transfers the whole burden of the family on her, she is forced to go back to Alec, now a preacher.
- Before long, the repentant Angel returns from abroad. Tess putting all the blames of her unhappiness on Alec, kills him. She flees with Angel but is caught by the police and hanged.

Key facts



- **setting (time)** · The 1880s and 1890s
- **setting (place)** · Wessex, the southwest of England
- **narrator** · Anonymous
- **point of view** · The narrator speaks in the third person, and looks deep into the characters' minds. The narrator is objective but has an omniscient understanding of future implications of characters' actions as they happen.
- **tone** · Realistic, pessimistic
- **themes** · The injustice of existence; changing ideas of social class in Victorian England; men dominating women

From chapter 1



- "Don't you really know, Durbeyfield, that you are the lineal representative of the ancient and knightly family of the d'Urbervilles, who derive their descent from Sir Pagan d'Urberville, that renowned knight who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, as appears by Battle Abbey Roll?" "Never heard it before, sir!"

----from the local parson

Comment



- the local parson informs Mr. Durbeyfield of his grand lineage, thus setting in motion the events that change the fate of Tess Durbeyfield forever.
- Interestingly, the parson's tone is **casual**, as if he is unable even to conceive of how his news might lead to tragedy later.
- For the parson it is genealogical trivia, but for Durbeyfield it feels like fate—the deepest truth about himself.

From chapter 37

- Clare came close, and bent over her. "Dead, dead, dead!" he murmured. After fixedly regarding her for some moments with the same gaze of unmeasurable woe he bent lower, enclosed her in his arms, and rolled her in the sheet as in a shroud. Then lifting her from the bed with as much respect as one would show to a dead body, he carried her across the room, murmuring, "My poor poor Tess, my dearest darling Tess! So sweet, so good, so true!" The words of endearment, withheld so severely in his waking hours, were inexpressibly sweet to her forlorn and hungry heart.

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- If it had been to save her weary life she would not, by moving or struggling, have put an end to the position she found herself in. Thus she lay in absolute stillness, scarcely venturing to breathe, and, wondering what he was going to do with her, suffered herself to be borne out upon the landing. "My wife—dead, dead!" he said
-

comment



- Angel Clare begins to sleepwalk on the third night of his estrangement from Tess.
- He consciously maintains a conviction that Tess is bad, corrupt, and cannot be forgiven, but his unconscious sleepwalking self reveals the tender love and moral respect for her ("so good, so true!")
- This revelation foreshadows his final realization, too late, that his condemnation of Tess was wrongheaded. Angel's words "dead, dead, dead" hint at Tess's future death, but they also signal Angel's conception of Tess. She is alive physically, but for him she is dead morally, as dead as an idea of purity that he once revered.

From Chapter 59



- “Justice” was done, and the President of the Immortals (in Aeschylean phrase) had ended his sport with Tess. And the d’Urberville knights and dames slept on in their tombs unknowing. The two speechless gazers bent themselves down to the earth, as if in prayer, and remained there a long time, absolutely motionless: the flag continued to wave silently. As soon as they had strength they arose, joined hands again, and went on.

Comment



- Its tired and unimpassioned tone suggests the narrator's weariness with the ways of the world, as if quite familiar with the fact that life always unfolds in this way.
- Tess's tale has not been a climactic unfolding, but a rather humdrum affair that perhaps happens all the time.
- Tess's suffering, by contrast, seems simply a game or "sport," as if nothing important is at stake.
- it is up to us to judge how ironic this justice is, or what her life's importance might be.

Religion and Tess



- Tess is very concerned with religion.
- She christens her child herself and names the child Sorrow.
- The Vicar refuses to perform burial service because the child was not christened by a clergyman (94-95)
- Tess buries Sorrow in unconsecrated ground, makes a homemade cross and lays flowers on his grave in an empty marmalade jar.

Religion and Angel

- Angel is a contradiction, because he will not become a clergyman (like his father) because he has "no feeling for the work." He feels it would be dishonest. His intellect does not allow his faith.



Alec's violation (sexual attraction)

- Alec violates Tess when he becomes interested in her as a beautiful conquest
- She is an object to him, and once he has conquered her, Tess feels as if she is a marked woman



Angel's violation



- Angel sees Tess as a very Spiritual Woman.
- This is a quality he admires, even though he himself is not a faithful believer
- By seeing Tess as the ideal woman that he believes her to be, he unknowingly violates her.
- He approaches her as an ideal, PURE woman. When he discovers that she is not pure, his violation becomes obvious. It is a double standard, because Angel is not a spiritual or pure person
- He violates her by loving the ideal, rather than who she really is.

Tess—social tragedy, fatal tragedy or personal tragedy ?

- was caused by the poor family (esp, father should be blamed for the Ancient Lineage.
- Was caused by gentlemen's desire, selfishness and prejudice (Alec and Angel)
- Was caused by people's opinions and indifference

In a word, Tess' tragedy was caused by social class and environment

思政启发



仁、义、礼、
智、信、恕、
忠、孝、悌

人生观

What's your understanding of virtue?



Recommendations

- <http://www.helsinki.fi/kasv/nokol/dickens.html>
 - 提供狄更斯的生平、创作以及各种评论。
 - <http://landow.stg.brown.edu/victorian/dickens/dickensov.html>
 - 提供英国维多利亚时代社会历史、政治面貌和宗教习俗以及狄更斯小说的文学意象、人物肖像和叙述结构等。
 - <http://landow.stg.brown.edu/victorian/rb/rbov.html>
 - 提供布朗宁概论、生平、作品、历史背景材料、与其他作家的关系及其诗歌的主题等。
 - <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/rp/authors/browning.html>
 - 提供布朗宁诗选
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