

CHAPTER III

THE ANALYSIS OF THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE OF TESS DURBEYFIELD

A. Intrinsic Approach

The subchapter embodies the analysis of the story as seen from intrinsic approach. The discussion will be focused on characterization, setting, plot and conflicts. The writer considers that the analysis of these four intrinsic elements will give adequate comprehension about the content of the story.

A.1. Character

The focus of the characters' analysis is on Tess Durbeyfield as the major character in the story. Besides other characters who have definite qualities and important influences in her development, Tess appears as fully developed central character in the story. The period of her life has presented a great deal of difficult experiences that reveal her status as the subject of tragedy. Yet, in the most distressing point of her life, she has shown her capabilities of encouraging a hopeful life. The development of this character and the qualities she possesses are the basic notions to suit the intended topic.

Tess is introduced as a young and simple country girl from a poor family; she was a sixteen years of age when the story begins. To her fortune, she is one of few girls who have an attractive feature. In her early life, Tess is simply a fine and picturesque country girl (14). Her attractiveness particularly lays in her "mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes (12)."

Many times within the story we could see how these prominent features of her beauty are exposed to emphasize her attractiveness. An instance of such exposure is when Alec watches her whistling tunes for Mrs. d'Urberville's bullfinches. Alec is attracted to Tess' feature as he watch her "sitting like impatience on a monument, and pouting up that red mouth to whistling shape... (72)."

Tess has appeared as an attempting figure for both Alec and Angel even in her later part of life. Her attractiveness, which has been emphasized throughout the story, is one of the complex causes of her suffering. It has leaded her to fateful relationship with Alec d'Urberville and Angel Clare. Both of the men are obviously attracted to Tess' physical beauty. Angel is also attracted to Tess' comeliness as he realizes that he has "never before seen a woman's lips and teeth which forced upon his mind with such

persistent iteration the old Elizabethan simile of roses filled with snow (192)."

As a native inhabitant of rural society, the wholeness of Tess beauty originates from the combination of her prominent innate features and her simplicity as a pure country girl. While Alec is merely attracted to Tess' physical beauty, Angel sees a stronger force of attraction behind it. To Angel, Tess has appeared as a "fresh and virginal daughter of nature (153)." The spotlessness in Tess' beauty, as once Angel admires her, is characterized by her simplicity and sincerity.

For Tess, her rural environment is the only world she is acquainted with and "every contour of the surrounding hills was as personal to her as that of her relatives' faces (41)." Being grown up in a rural society has made her conversant with the local habits and tradition. It is shown in the beginning of the story when Tess has appeared to be a participant of a local celebration called May-Day dance. Furthermore, Tess' occupations in farms and dairy-house clearly show her preference in getting a job -those of the rural society which she has mastered.

The contrasting quality in Tess' simplicity is her pride and nobility. Although she is just an ordinary country girl, her pride and nobility has put her dignity in higher position at any occasion.

The first time her mother tells the plan to seek help from D'Urberville family, Tess seems reluctant to put up with it. Tess' pride makes "the part of poor relation one of particular distaste to her (40)."

In the effort to support her poor family, Tess prefers taking a job rather than seeking help from her relatives. But when she cannot find any job and has to go to d'Urberville's home, her only wish is that she "had not fallen in so readily with her mother's plans for claiming kin and had endeavoured to gain assistance nearer home (43)."

Tess' nobility is also apparent in her acquaintance with Alec. At first, Alec believes that his wealth and fame will make Tess fond of him. He is surprised to learn that Tess is not those of other country girls who will be delighted when he touches them, sits near to them or even gives them a kiss. Tess resistance against Alec effort's to tempt her has changed Alec's opinion in perceiving her; Tess is "mighty sensitive for a cottage girl (65)."

In her relationship with Alec and Angel, people of higher class, she feels inferior to the class' differences. On some occasions, Tess avoids mingling with people of this class. When she is jobless and finds it difficult to get employment, she keeps on preventing herself from seeking an indoor occupation; "fearing towns, large houses,

people means and social sophistication, and of manners other than [1] (350)."

Thus, her first acquaintance with Alec has deeply influenced her opinion about people of higher class. Her feeling of inferiority appears as she realizes her social background. But her innate pride has never allowed her dignity to be abused by such class differences. When it happens, her sensitiveness comes out as her only defense against any insult or slur.

Such sensitiveness has also been the basic reason of Tess' responses towards Angel's family. Tess feels insulted when she overhears Angel's brothers' conversation about Angel's unsuccessful marriage. Upon his marriage with Tess, the brothers consider Angel has "throwing himself away upon a dairymaid" (382). The defense mechanism of her pride bursts out as Angel's brothers discover and take away the walking boots she has hidden when she put on her best shoes to approach to their house. Tess learns that the brothers regard her boots as if they have been thrown away by some tramp and she feels "as if she had been hounded up that hill like a scorned thing by those -to her- superfine clerics (383)."

The very environment that has formed Tess' capacities is her own family. She is born in a poor family with uneducated parents.

Her father has been busied himself with liquor and her mother has spend most of her time at the local inn, accompanying him. The fact that Tess does not have a good relationship with her parents has had an influence within her at the early stage of her life.

The careless mother has spent less time chaperoning Tess in her youth. Thus, without any companion to enter her womanhood, Tess has grown with callowness. She, in her early youth, "was a mere vessel of emotion untinged by experience (13)." The event when Tess is seduced by Alec is a result of her inexperience in anticipating Alec's mischievous deed. In bitter lamentation Tess regrets her mothers' carelessness in neglecting her while she grows older.

"O mother, my mother!" cried the agonized girl, turning passionately upon her parent as if her poor heart would break. "How could I be expected to know? I was a child when I left this house four months ago. Why didn't you tell me there was danger in men-folk? Why didn't you warn me? Ladies know what to fend hands against, because they read novels that tell them of these tricks; but I never had the chance o' learning in that way, and you did not help me!" (104)

It is by experience Tess learns her womanhood. Her understanding about life comes from her bitter experiences. In her early age she has experienced an unjust judgement from her society regarding the event when she is seduced by Alec. She has been alienated and scorned by her society since they consider her as no longer a woman of virtue. While she has not already recovered from such sorrow, she has to lose her illicit baby. The heaviest of it all is that she has to face such happenings alone.

On many occasions the story has presented such events when Tess has to struggle alone. She has to make a decision while there is no one with whom she can consult. The only thing to be considered is the reality that often opposes her will. But, to some extent, her courage to face the reality alone and take her best decision suggest her capabilities of independence.

Tess' determination in leaving Alec noticeably is of decisive character of independence. Tess cannot voluntarily let Alec marry her even when he has succeeded in seducing her. She has refused Alec's offers of job, the substitution of his apology, in regard that she does not want to take anything from him and therefore she is not obliged to him (98). Alec has learnt Tess' independent character and called Tess "Miss independence" since his offers of help have

always been refused before (80). For Tess, Alec's wealth has given nothing to her happiness.

Furthermore, it is Tess who at last takes the risk of her fateful relationship with Alec d'Urberville. Despite the resentment of the society towards her and the illicit baby, she has succeeded in affirming her independence. She believes that her determination in leaving Alec is an effort "to taste a new sweet independence at any price (115)." Amidst the resentful society and the difficulties in bringing up her baby, she resolves on taking a job in her native village. It is her intuitive feeling that forces her to be useful to both herself and her family.

Tess' independence is also apparent after her unsuccessful marriage with Angel. In her effort not to disappoint her father about her unsuccessful marriage, she leaves her family and lives in a distant place. On the other hand, her parents have depended on her help to maintain the family. Her effort to earn money for the family in her helpless and solitary life and her reluctance to get help from Angel's family shows that she is capable of independence.

Thus, Tess' feeling of pride and nobility may become the background of her independent character. But it is only by chances of experiencing life through its complexity that has yielded

her self-assured character to struggle along. In the case of Tess, her experiences have tested her capabilities to make her best decision in such difficult condition. The essence of Tess' independence emerges when she realizes she has an authority to judge her surrounding and determine her actions.

Other quality that is apparent within Tess is her responsibilities for sustaining her poor family. Being the eldest child of a large family with careless parents has forced Tess to give much contribution to the family welfare at her early life. For Tess, her parents' intention by sending her to ask help from d'Urberville family is a demand to ask her participation in maintaining the family.

Compared with her parents, Tess' feeling of responsibilities is her conspicuous character in keeping up the family survival. The burden of sustaining her sisters and brothers has often yielded a forceful request within her to grant her life to the family well-being. Tess has to suppress her will as she reconsiders how the family has helplessly depended on her and "the necessity of applying herself heart and soul to their needs took her out of her own cares (442)."

Tess' feeling of responsibility for her family's welfare apparently is a weak spot in her effort to secure her own desires.

Eventually, Tess has to deny her resistance against Alec proposal for marrying her. Despite her hatred against Alec, Tess realizes that Alec is the only man who can help her family since Angel has left her. Alec knows this, and many times he uses tricky deeds to win Tess' heart by showing his generosity in helping Tess' family (446).

The reality that often opposes her will has yielded Tess' realistic attitude. She has been so faithful to Angel during their separation in regard that Angel will come back to her. From such hope she gains energy to refuse Alec's proposal. But her hope is confronted to the fact that her family needs help. The reality forcefully demands her actions as she realizes that she cannot repudiate the only helper of the family, Alec d'Urberville. When Alec has succeeded in convincing Tess that her husband will not come back to her, she is forced to deny her faithfulness and lets Alec marries her.

Obviously some considerations that have influenced Tess' actions are the blending of her intuitive sense of morality and her keen awareness of justice. Tess' morality somewhat differs from the general moral convention at that time. She catches the essence of the morality in its principal form. Compared to the people of her surrounding, Tess has deeper understanding about the application

of the true moral value. While most people in her society see the standard of morality in narrow-minded way, Tess has her own way of seeing the truth of her action.

Her love to her illicit baby, despite the resentment of the society, shows us that she has an intuitive virtue. She hates Alec d'Urberville so much but she finds no reason to hate the baby. On the other hand, Tess' father regards the baby as a smudge on the nobility of the family. Yet her feeling of justice along with her maternal intuition tell her that the baby is innocent and that she should preserve the its life. She is so distressed when her baby is ill. She also feels guilty when she finds out that her baby has not been baptized and that her father has locked the door to prevent her fetching a parson (117).

Her conversation with the narrow-minded moralist, who has painted several biblical words on the wall, can show Tess' inquiry concerning the social judgement toward her. In relation to her accident with Alec, the man indirectly accuses Tess as a sinner. She, then, argues that the sin is not of her own seeking. A strict and thoughtless judgement in the man's explanation by quoting some biblical words has emerged Tess' disapproval towards such superficial belief (102). The biblical words that have "entered her heart with accusatory horror" shows that she is partly responsible

for the sin, but her feeling of justice refuses the accusation that the guilt is all hers. She thinks that she is not worth such horrible punishment for the things that she doesn't want to happen on her.

Ironically, Tess' morality appears to be an obstacle in her effort to live a happy life. Despite Tess' mother opinion that she should not let Angel know her past, it is her sense of morality that convinces her to confess to Angel. She feels it is wrong to let Angel marry her without telling him that she is not virgin.

On no account could she agree to a step which might afterwards cause bitter rueing to her husband for his blindness in wedding her. And she held that what her conscience had decided to her when her mind was unbiassed ought not to be overruled now. (226)

But as Angel despises her after he knows Tess' past, we learn that often the standard convention of morality cannot agree with Tess' morality. She feels punished when Angel despises her and leaves for Brazil.

The persistent and horrible punishment from the society and people around her is one thing she tries to reject in her tragic life. Many times her feeling of justice convinces her that she does not deserve such punishment. She realizes that she has sinned, but she thinks she should not be punished eternally for one mistake.

Her sin has never been intentional, and she feels her punishment, from Angel and others, has been too cruel and merciless (471).

The fullness of Tess' characters appears as we learn that she is not a perfect woman to match such painful life. In her struggle, Tess repeatedly falls into desperation or weak moments when she discourages all her strength. She is terrified when her society, or even her husband, blames her for being easily seduced by Alec. The persistent resentment of the society has been such hard punishment for her while she tries to reconcile her own foolishness. Recognizing the unjust punishment has been too cruel, she feels hopeless and "the ghastliness of her momentary pride would convict her, and recall her to reserved listlessness again (106)."

The reality that often disappoints Tess' "appetite for joy" in some cases has yielded pessimistic thoughts within her. She sees her unsuccessful marriage, and all other miseries, as the denial of her will to enjoy her life to its fullness. Sometimes she pities herself for having such miserable life.

Was there another such a wretched being as she in the world? Tess asked herself; and thinking of her wasted life, said, "All is vanity." She repeated the words

mechanically, till she reflected that this was a most inadequate thought for modern days. (p 353)

A striking quality in Tess Durbeyfield, despite her sorrow and lamentation, is her endurance against such painful life. Her power of endurance emerges from her continuous efforts to preserve the desires of a hopeful life. She is a decisive character with such convincing determination in securing her "appetite for joy". Her decision to marry Angel despite her recognition of the consequences she might undergo is an instance of such decisive character.

Tess sees her desires as "the irresistible, universal, automatic tendency to find sweet pleasure somewhere, which pervades all life, from the meanest to the highest (134). Furthermore, she is a sort of woman who dare to take any consequences of her desire. Her endurance emerges from her fundamental outlook in viewing life.

The past was past; whatever it had been it was no more at hand. Whatever its consequences, time would close over them; they would all in a few years be as if they had never been, and she herself grassed down and forgotten. (115)

Her outlook towards life has been a recuperative power to let all her misery passes before her. Amidst the bitter suffering, she can

feel the pulse of hopeful life still warm within her. She has been a woman "whom the turbulent experiences of the last year or two had quite failed to demoralize (125)." However, the painful experiences have given deep influences in her development. They have changed Tess from a simple girl to complex woman.

Inside this exterior, over which the eye might have roved as over a thing scarcely percipient, almost inorganic, there was the record of a pulsing life which had learnt too well, for its years, of the dust and ashes of things, of the cruelty of lust and the fragility of love. (357)

In an instant view at Tess Durbeyfield's life will bring out the mixing of contradictory grim reality and her self-assured characters. She has seemingly been set up by conditions, chances and her own qualities that lead her to such miserable life. She has lived a tragic life since she has failed to achieve anyone's dream of long lasting happiness. But the breathtaking facts of such tragedy lie within her characters; her only power to struggle and secure her hopes and desires against such miserable life.

A.2. Plot and Conflicts

The writer considers that the plot of Tess of the D'Urberville is of the simple one. There are no subplots which interweave with the main story. Apparently, Hardy has focused the plot of the story on

the life of the main character, Tess Durbeyfield. The continuity of events within Tess' life which is maintained by the arrangement of conflicts appears in the story has become a consideration in this analysis.

The story begins with the revealing of the Durbeyfield's ancestral name. A parson explains to Tess' father, John Durbeyfield, that the name "Durbeyfield" is a corruption of the name "d'Urberville", and that Jack's ancestors were once important people in the Wessex region. Upon hearing the news, John is gratified and proud of himself as the successor of the noble name.

The beginning of the plot –the disclosure of Tess' ancestor– is the first important aspect in revealing the cause of Tess' suffering. Coincidence happens as the family learns that there is another family in local region named d'Urberville, the same name with their ancestor. Upon learning this, Tess' parents plan to get Tess to make the acquaintance of the rich Mrs. d'Urberville whom she believes to be a relation.

The scheme comes to reality when Tess family loss their horse, their only means of livelihood. "The haggling business, which had mainly depended on the horse, became disorganized forthwith (39)." The Durbeyfield family suffers from their poverty after the death of the horse since Tess' parents could not maintain

his large family in comfort. Poverty appears as a motive to Tess family to send Tess to d'Urbervilles' residence.

Everyday seem to throw upon her young shoulder more of the family burdens, and that Tess should be the representative of the Durbeyfields at the d'Urberville mansion came as a thing of course. (42)

By this point, we can see more conflicts arise in Tess' family. Despite her reluctance to ask for help from the d'Urbervilles, Tess feels responsible to the family welfare. She realizes how her parents have neglected the family by wasting much of their time in local inns. Moreover, Tess also feels guilty of causing the death of the horse.

Later, after Tess has arrived at d'Urberville's residence, we can learn that the d'Urberville family is not a real Tess' relation. They were rich merchant family in the north region of England who decided to settle as a county family in the south. Feeling the necessity of changing the name that would not identify their occupation in the past, they simply choose the name "d'Urberville" at random. This condition leads to greater problems since Tess, not knowing the fact of d'Urberville family, has appeared as a young innocence country girl to which Alec d'Urberville, the son of the family, is attracted.

The conflicts arise; Tess has been set up by nature to encounter such hard conditions. She doesn't like Alec as well as his efforts to tempt her. On the other hand, she is unable to find other jobs and has to work in d'Urberville family to maintain her family. She "has hoped to be a teacher at the school, but fates seemed to decide otherwise (55)."

The climax of Tess' acquaintance with Alec happens when Alec has succeeded in seducing Tess. Her lack of experience and her careless mother who never tell her "there was danger in men-folk (104)," is the main explanation of this event. Yet this is a fateful calamity for Tess' future. Tess regards Alec as a villain who has played tricks on her, and this has cause her rejection to marry him. The fact that she has been wronged by a man other than her husband is the cause of her later sufferings.

The pattern of the work of nature to lead Tess in difficult such situations comes from the intertwining of her complex problems. Some problems occur from the poverty of her family. Many times we can notice how Tess has voluntarily let herself encounter difficult situations because she feels responsible of the family welfare. Owing careless parents means additional responsibilities for Tess.

Beside Tess' family and the poverty that seem to oppose Tess' will "to taste anew sweet independence at any price (115)," there are other conflicts between Tess and her society. The illicit child from her relationship with Alec is an offence to her society. Although Tess loves her child very much, the resentment of the society against the child has failed to heal Tess' misery at her own home. The convention of social law regards Tess as a sinner who has no reason to be freed from the blame of standard of moral convention.

She might have seen that what had bowed her head so profoundly –the thought of the world's concern at her situation– was founded on an illusion. She was not an existence, an experience, a passion, a structure of sensations, to anybody but herself. (115)

After the death of her child, Tess decides to leave all of her previous misery and starts a new life by seeking a job in a distant region. New conflicts arise again as Tess meets Angel Clare, a son from clergy family, and falls in love with him. She suffers from the dilemma of telling Angel the truth of the fact that she is not virgin, and consequently she has to take the risk of being left by Angel. On the other hand, her love to Angel yields such strong force to discourage her honesty, keeping up her relationship with Angel.

In reality, she was drifting into acquiescence. Every see-saw of her breath, every wave of her blood, every pulse singing in her ears, was a voice that joined with nature in revolt against her scrupulousness. Reckless, inconsiderate acceptance of him; to close with him at the altar, revealing nothing and chancing discovery; to snatch ripe pleasure before the iron teeth of pain could have time to shut upon her: that was what love counseled; (228)

When at last Tess has decided to tell Angel about her past through a letter and she slip it under his door, coincidence happens as the letter goes under the carpet (269). Once again, nature has shown its force to confront Tess effort. Tess' true intention of telling her past to Angel before their wedding is to convince herself that she will not disappoint him marrying a woman who has been wronged by a man. By this time, her intention to be honest to Angel fails.

The convention of social law, again, takes its turn to work on Angel's mind, as he knows that Tess is not a virgin. In their wedding night, Angel is very shocked when Tess confesses to him about her past . Despite his love to Tess, it is obvious that the standard moral convention of his society still influences Angel's

feeling toward Tess upon hearing her confession. Apparently, it is the imagination of Tess' purity and innocence that has become the ground of his love to Tess in the present moment. Tess' confession has deeply influence Angel's opinion about her. For Angel, Tess has failed to fulfil his dream of her purity and innocence and he "looked upon her as a species of impostor; a guilty woman in the guise of an innocent one (293)."

Being unable to bear his disappointment, Angel decides to part from Tess. He cannot acknowledge Tess as his wife while Alec still lives, but will not divorce her. Angel tells Tess not to attempt to see him although Tess hopes that continuing their life together will break down his resistance. Later, Tess decides to return home when she cannot change Angel's decision to go to Brazil.

After Angel's leaving, Tess encounters a difficult condition. She has used all the money that Angel has left for her to help her poor family; and she has not already found any job. Tess' lack of fortune to get a job is also a problem that often puts her in difficult condition. Despite "her trained National teaching and Standard knowledge under an infinitely Revised Code (23)," Tess is not those of the fortunate people who can get a better job. The best job she can get in her lifetime is her occupation as dairymaid in Talbothays where she meets Angel Clare. But this occupation has provided

almost nothing for the welfare of her family. Throughout the story we learn that her misfortune in earning sufficient money for her family leads her to get help from Alec, the agent of her tragedy.

As Tess decides to seek help from Angel's family she overhears the conversation between Angel's brothers about her unsuccessful marriage. Being insulted by their remarks upon her social status, she discourages her decision. Angel's brother "candidly recognized that there were a few unimportant scores of millions of outsiders in civilized society, person who were neither University men nor churchmen; but they were to be tolerated than reckoned with and respected (205)." The difference in Tess' and Angel's social background has become an obstacle in the relationship between the two family. Social prejudice clearly shown by the opinion of Angel's family toward Tess', the lower social class.

In her disappointment towards Angel's family's attitude, and the burden of her family's poverty that grows heavier, Tess meets Alec d'Urberville. Alec, who is still attracted to Tess, tries to tempt her again. Although Tess finally tells him that she has been married, Alec does not give up his effort to tempt Tess. He offers his help to look after Tess' family if Tess will marry him (402). By this time, Tess suffers from dilemma between the necessity to

defend her status as Angel's wife and to alleviate the difficult condition in her family.

The work of nature that opposes her will to enjoy her life is the important aspect of her sufferings. When it comes for Tess to make a crucial decision, nature often withstands her intentions. Thus, it happens to Tess when her father dies and her mother is sick. She has to return home and finds a way to sustain her family. Being convinced that Angel will not come back to her, she gives up her resistance against Alec's proposal for marrying her.

But the most disastrous event of Tess' life is her encounter with Angel who has come back from Brazil. The tension arises when Angel who has realized his unjustness finds Tess has been married to Alec d'Urberville. The long separation between the couple now comes as a disaster rather than a relief for Tess' suffering. Tess is in the extremity of her disappointment. She blames herself for giving up her love easily; and a sudden outrageous hatred comes out when she thinks Alec has lied to her and used her family to win her love (486). In retaliation for her deep misery, disappointment and anger, Tess murders Alec d'Urberville.

The scene of the murder has been forecasted in the previous part of the story when Tess unintentionally kills her horse and

regards herself as a murderess. Both scenes mark some significant events of her life; the first scene leads to the beginning of Tess' acquaintance with Alec, the other ends her relation. They are the milestones in Tess' sufferings. The scene when Tess murders Alec serves as the resolution of Tess' unfinished business with Alec in their first encounter.

Escaping from Alec's house, Tess overtakes Angel and tells him that she has murdered Alec. Angel is amazed, but he determines to protect her and accompany her in the escape. After spending a week in an abandoned house together, Tess shows her reluctance to escape. She is exhausted by both the long journey she has taken and her restless feeling. Her resolution is to settle on what she has achieved so far. She is content to know that Angel still loves her and appraises her short experience as sweet and lovely one (498). So, she gives up her escape at Stonehenge, and is arrested by the police. The story ended with Tess' execution, in which the last milestone of her life as the subject of tragedy is described in an ironic remark.

"Justice" was done, and the President of the Immortals, in Æschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess.
(508)

A.3. Setting

The story of "Tess of the D'Urberville" takes place in Wessex, a southern region in England. Precisely, the story happens in some places within the region, such as the village of Marlott, Tantridge, Talbothays, and other nearby villages. Hardy's extensive description of the region has obviously showed his familiarity with the real region of his time. His imaginary setting in "Tess' of the D'Urberville" is a real picture of the environment he has experienced.

The story itself happens in the time of transition; where there is a shift in the old tradition as well as the agricultural life of the villagers. It is in the beginning of the industrial revolution when the old settled way of life starts to change as the impact of industrial development. However, the rapid development in some regions has affected Wessex less than others. The region is secluded from other rapid-developed regions, and "...for the most part untrodden as yet by tourist or landscape painter, though within a four hours' journey from London (9)." Wessex region offers little favor for the establishment of new business. For most people of nearby countries, the region "...is of historic, no less than of topographical interest (10)."

Living in less favored region, the villagers have preserved some of their tradition and customs that have emerged from the history of the regions. The glory of Wessex kingdom in the past has left its cultural heritage in the villagers' tradition. Many old customs, however, has survived in disguised form. The May-Day dance, for instance, is a kind of celebrations held in the afternoon by a group of young women named "club-walking". The celebration is always an interesting event to the young villagers, although "...its real interest was not observed by the participators in the ceremony (10)." In the recent memory of the inhabitants, the celebration is merely a customs of walking in procession. In addition, the "club-walking" itself formerly exists to uphold to local Cerealia, goddess of corn and fruitfulness. It has lived for hundreds of years, and continued to exist as a sort of sisterhood.

Local beliefs and superstitions are other kinds of the cultural heritage that still exist in those villages. For most of the villagers, the happening of unusual natural phenomena may signify or carry out another incident. The cock that crows in the afternoon, after Tess' wedding celebration, is seen by the villagers as a bad omen in Tess' marriage (274). For the dairymen and dairymaids, the milk that fails to be butter signifies the presence of somebody who is in love (171).

Besides local beliefs and superstitions, the influence of Christianity is also apparent in daily life of the villagers. Most people of the village are well grounded in Holy Scriptures (117). Some of them, like Tess, regularly attend services in churches. The fact that most of the villagers are not well educated has rendered their narrowness in grasping the teachings in the church. However, in a certain way the teachings have deeply influenced their consideration in judging things. Tess' guilty feeling as she realizes that her baby, who is about to die, has not been baptized is an instance of such influence. Her imagines about the punishment may reveal such influences.

She thought of the child consigned to the nethermost corner of hell, as its double doom for lack of baptism and lack of legitimacy; saw the arch-fiend tossing it with his three-pronged fork, like the one they used for heating the oven on baking days; to which picture she added many other quaint and curious details of torment sometimes taught the young in this Christian country. (117)

Consequently, Tess' decision to leave Alec d'Urberville after he has seduced her has been considered as a serious misconduct by the villagers. In the eye of those villagers, Tess is the one to blame since she has rejected Alec intention to marry her. The accusation

of society eventually has rendered Tess' alienation. Some people of scrupulous character even reject Tess' presence in the village (451).

Furthermore, the society also regards Tess' illicit baby from her relationship with Alec d'Urberville as an offence towards the conventional belief of the villagers. They see the baby as part of Tess' misconduct. So, after the baby has died, they order Tess to bury the baby in a particular place "where all unbaptized infants, notorious drunkards, suicides, and others of the conjecturally damned are laid (122)."

Despite of the Wessex's isolation from other regions, the widespread influence of the industrialization has also had an impact to the villagers' life, particularly in the agricultural mater. The condition is different with the past when "the majority of field-folk ... had remained all their lives on one farm, which had been the home also of their fathers and grandfathers (449)." The intrusion of machine into the farm has noticeably contributed to the changes within the agricultural life. Those modern machines, such like threshing-machine, has greatly reduced the tasks of the farmers. They had been the center of the agricultural world.

The long chimney running up beside an ash-tree, and the warmth which radiated from the spot, explained without the necessity of much daylight that here was the engine

which was to act as the *primum mobile* of this little world. (415)

Thus, the reduced amount of agricultural workers needed in the farm yields the increasing number of unemployed people that, at last, has triggered migrations of the villagers. The eve of Old Lady-Day is an instance to shows us how the traditional agricultural life has suffered great changes. It is the time when the villagers have to renew their contracts for the following year (449).

The major impact of such condition is the widening of the economic gap between the people. The emergence of new social class, that is those of the wealthy families and tenants such like Farmer Groby and d'Urberville family, has become an encroachment on the old established social strata. The social strata that previously regard the succession of the social status, now, have a little effect to the welfare of the successor.

Apparently, Hardy uses this phenomenon to create an irony within the story. When Tess' father, Jack Durbeyfield, realizes that his ancestor were once of high social status, he insists on the succession of the status. Later, because of the poverty, Tess' family has to claim help from the wealthy d'Urberville family on the grounds of their relationship. In fact, there is no kinship; the name of the ancient d'Urberville has only been assumed.

Besides the intrusion of wealthy family in social class partition, there are also traits of the old established social class. The influence of Christianity within society has also distinguished some families, particularly those of the clerical ones, from the community. Angel's family is an example of this middle class family.

With its rigid evangelical faith, Angel's family stands for the limited moral values of the Christian middle class. Their single-minded approach to life seems to be a reasonable cause of their intolerance toward people of lower class than themselves. Angel's effort to teach Tess middle class standard values before taking her to visit his family, is a proof of his family's point of view toward people of Tess' community. For Angel's parents their son worth marrying "an accomplished young lady". Therefore, Angel's mother asked him once whether Tess is "of a family such as he would care to marry (210)." And, overwhelmed by his love to Tess, Angel convinces his mother that the family will tolerate any social shortcomings of Tess' quality. Indeed, latent prejudices against people of lower class as being poor, unaccomplished, and uneducated still exist in the mind of middle class people.

B. The essence of Tess' Struggle for Existence: An Existentialism Approach

B.1. Tess' Comprehension of the Determined World

Discussing the tragic life of Tess Durbeyfield, we cannot avoid considering the role of the *fate* that has predetermined her condition. We realize then that 'Tess' struggle does not start from the beginning. She has been set up to be a member of Durbeyfield family, a poor and helpless family. Such condition that should have never been her choice if only she has been given an authority to choose.

'Tess' life starts from a given condition that has yielded too much suffering in her life. We have learnt so far that the poverty of Tess' family and her position as the eldest daughter has made her parents depend the welfare of the family on her. It is also her parents' effort to maintain the family by sending Tess to d'Urberville family that eventually leads to her acquaintance with Alec d'Urberville.

We often inquire the work of *fate* in human life when we see how the unjust work of *fate* has given different chances to each individual to succeed their hopes in life. Thus, we can see that Tess needs harder efforts to secure her hopes than Alec d'Urberville and

his wealth do. Alec has proven that, with his wealth, he can eventually succeed his hope in marrying Tess. On the contrary, Tess fails to avoid Alec and has to deny her hatred since she needs Alec's help to maintain her family.

To find the reasons behind the design of *Fate* in individual's life, in this case is Tess', is beyond our knowledge. Nevertheless, every individual shares a common problem in conceiving the work of *Fate* in their life. It has to come to their consciousness to realize that their life starts from such given condition. It is the point of self-realization when every effort to secure the hopes is bounded by the reality. The fact that Tess has been born in poor family –the descendants of once a noble family– with such careless parents is the preliminary reality she has to comprehend. Such comprehension has been the background of her struggle. Tess' struggles start at the point when she realizes that she has a poor and helpless family, and therefore, her self-sacrifice becomes reasonable to her.

Apparently, it is our innate consciousness that has yielded our comprehension. We are confined in such determined world. It is the truth of our nature that we cannot reject. Yet, it needs further comprehension from every individual to realize such realities as the facts of their life; a starting point at which

individual's desires and hopes are formed and carried on. Without the comprehension of the work of *Fate* in life, individual cannot begin their efforts to secure hopes and desires. In fact, every individual has generated their own comprehension and, therefore, their struggles are reasonable.

Furthermore, personal comprehension of the work of *Fate* in life also builds the uniqueness and differences of individual's attitude towards life. The fact that every individual has a different attitude towards their life suggests a vast diversity in such comprehension. We can observe the difference, for an instance, between Tess' and her father in regarding their actual condition within the family. Tess father, John Durbeyfield, views his life as successive existence of his noble ancestor, the d'Urberville family. The pride of his ancestral nobility has been his basic consideration in achieving his goals of life. On the contrary, Tess' comprehension towards the condition of the family and her position as the eldest child has made her view life as an ineradicable demand of responsibility.

As Tess grew older, and began to see how matters stood, she felt quite a Malthusian towards her mother for thoughtlessly giving her so many little sisters and

brothers, when it was such a trouble to nurse and provide them. (41)

Thus, the diversity of attitude has rendered different reasons of struggle within the member of Tess' family. It is noticeable that Tess' attempt to maintain the family is the manifestation of her responsibilities. For Tess, the nobility of her ancestor gives nothing to her struggle. She has learnt that the pedigree, ancestral skeletons, monumental record, and the d'Urberville lineaments have offered nothing to the family welfare (16). On the other hand, Tess' father sees that the pride of being the descendants of the noble d'Urberville family is the only valuable property of the family. He insists on defending such pride by sending Tess to Alec's family. Whether one of their attitudes is right and the other is wrong, they have different approach to life that eventually influences their goal of life and efforts to secure it.

Furthermore, the comprehension of the work of *Fate* which influence Tess' attitude towards life is not merely based on her historical facts such like her family condition. Other forms of the work of *Fate* have also influenced Tess' attitude towards life. Natural forces such like contingencies or unexpected events appear as an inevitable agent of change that regenerates her attitude. Such alteration is crucial in individual's development.

In the case of Tess, we can notice that her comprehension suggests the development of her character. The event when Alec has succeeded in seducing her, for an example, is another milestone in her life after which she has to undergo bitter resentment from the society. At first, She is aware of her responsibilities toward the family.

She becomes humanely beneficent towards the small ones, and to help them as much as possible she used, as soon as she left school, to lend a hand at haymaking or harvesting on neighbouring farms.... (41-42)

But when her future effort to sustain the family are discouraged by the bitter resentment of her surrounding, her consciousness about such intangible happening has provided her a renewed attitude towards her determined world.

Moreover, alone in a desert island would she have been wretched at what had happened to her? Not greatly. If she could have been but just created, to discover herself as a spouseless mother, with no experience of life except as the parent of a nameless child, would the position have caused her to despair? No, she would have taken it calmly, and found pleasures therein. Most of the misery

had been generated by her conventional aspect, and not by her innate sensations. (115)

It is obvious that, every individual, like Tess and other characters, has chances to readjust their comprehension to the actual situation. Tess' determined world does not produce a fixed nature of her character. When confronted with reality, every individual has an ability to alter their comprehension and, therefore, regenerates their attitude towards life.

Human's consciousness of the determined world has yielded individual's actual comprehension, which in turn incites individual's attitude towards life. In other words, human consciousness of the beyond power provides feedback for their comprehension. The alteration of comprehension towards life reveals individuals' authority to initiate the possible efforts in securing their goal of life.

Behind the objective reality and laws of the world, individual's comprehension reveals to us the existence of individual as a dynamic subject. In his book, "Readings in the Philosophy of Man", Kelly has described Jaspers' thoughts as follows:

The first sign of awakening circumspection in the individual is that he will show a new way of holding himself towards the world. Selfhood or self-existence first

arises out of his being against the world in the world.

(162)

It means that individuals can create a subjective world, an ideal world for their existence. Individuals don't exist in the world like plants or animals, submitting its being to the superior forces and laws. For individuals, being in the world does not means they have to submit to the blind mechanism of natural forces. They reveal their existence through continuous process of understanding, planning, and altering their life whereby, at the same moment, they create their ideal world.

B.2. Tess' Ideal World versus the Reality

We realize that the difficulties in the Tess' life are not merely those of her predetermined factors. We have discussed so far that individual's personal comprehension has built such ideal world for them whereby the best possible plans to secure the goal of life are contrived. Yet, while Tess has built the very plans to achieve her goal of life, she, as well as other individuals, is susceptible to a vast variety of conditions and often undergoes opposed experiences.

Many times, the opposed experiences Tess has to undergo are capable of giving her suffering. The notion of suffering appears since there is the presence of conscious mental activities in every individual to perceive, feel and compare the actual situation with

the ideal world. Tess' awareness of her actual situation has introduced her to the inevitable sufferings whenever the reality is against her hopes and desires.

The prominent suffering Tess has to endure is the poverty of her family. It is the fact in Tess' life that has yielded persistent suffering within her. There are many times when an immediate support is needed; when Tess has no other options but relinquishes her hopes and desire. We can see such self-sacrifice when Tess is sent to d'Urbervilles after her family loses the horse, their only means of livelihood. Actually Tess is reluctant to go to d'Urberville's residence and wishes that she had not been easily convinced by her mother's plan to get assistance near home (43).

The worst suffering yielded by the poverty of Tess' family is that she has to deny her loyalty to Angel. She cannot reject Alec proposal to marry her as she realizes that Alec is the only one who can help her to sustain the family. Tess' self-sacrifice may be the manifestation of her responsibility towards the family, yet it has never come to her mind that she even has to sacrifice her hopes and desire. It has disappointed her a lot and rendered her gloomy outlook.

To her and her like, birth itself was an ordeal of degrading personal compulsion, whose gratui-tousness

nothing in the result seemed to justify, and at best could only palliate. (450)

The essence of such suffering is now obvious as the clash between Tess' "appetite for joy" and her preliminary comprehension of life. She has been acquainted with her father's ideal world of pride and nobility from the very beginning. Moreover, she also realizes that "her mother's intelligence was that of a happy child." For Tess, Joan Durbeyfield is "simply an additional one, and that not the eldest, to her own long family of waiters on Providence (41)." Thus, her comprehension of such ineradicable demand of responsibility has been an imperative that confines her desires to such an extent.

Another suffering is also brought out by the conventional values of her surrounding. Tess' estrangement from the society after Alec has seduced her, for an instance, has given much suffering in her life. She is so depressed when recognizing that her decision in leaving Alec has made the society view her as a woman of no virtue. Her true intention is to escape from Alec and, therefore, she rejects her mother suggestion about marrying Alec. But such true intention has made Tess break the acceptable social law. The burden of the disharmony between Tess' intention and her reality is the divulgence of individual's anxiety towards the ensuing consequences of individual's actions.

Analysis

But this encompassment of her own characterization, based on shreds of convention, peopled by phantoms and voices antipathetic to her, was a sorry and mistaken creation of Tess's fancy –a cloud of moral hobgoblins by which she was terrified without reason. (108)

Certainly, Tess cannot foresee that some particular events may happen and change the direction of her plan. She may not yet realize, at first, that the poverty of her family can lead her to self-sacrifice. It is also beyond her knowledge to know the burden of her relationship with Alec d'Urberville. What we can notice whenever such unexpected event happens is the disagreement between individual's ideal world and the reality. Thus, behind the well-planned efforts to achieve goal of life, the limited knowledge of individual has rendered any possible outcome.

Furthermore, it is also essential to notice that along with her efforts to secure her goal of life, Tess has experienced some *Limit Situations*. Her *Suffering* has been brought out by the *Facts* of her family, *Struggle* and *Faults*. We have observed that Tess' comprehension about the *Facts* of her surrounding has yielded her feeling of responsibility. It is the reason for her, and like others, to live; the idea whereby all her hopes and desires are derived from. And it is only by *Struggle* Tess can convert her hopes and desires

into reality. Her marriage with Alec after Angel has left her is an instance of her *Struggle* to maintain her family.

However within her *Struggle*, Tess experiences *Faults* or the unintended outcome of her actions. She may not realize before that her decision in leaving Alec, after he has seduced her, eventually leads to her alienation and incites bitter resentment from the society. *Faults* are the ever-present, unexpected possibilities of individual's *Struggle*. On many occasions, the *Faults* in Tess' intentions are rendered by her limited knowledge of the causality of her actions.

The most abrupt outcome of Tess' intention that has given her much suffering is Angel's rejection towards the fact that she is not virgin. At first, being discouraged by her self-realization, she resists Angel's approach. When she has convinced herself of Angel's love to her, she encourages herself to accept Angel's proposal to marry her. Tess' decision to send Angel the letter that tells him the painful experiences of her past is part of her anticipation to avoid the unexpected outcome of her intention. At least, she can respond to Angel's reaction earlier; hoping that their marriage will not yield many troubles later.

Yet we also aware that contingencies are crucial in individual's life since they can change the direction of individual's

plan. In Tess' case, we can observe how such contingency happens when the letter she has slipped under the door of Angel's room goes under the carpet (269). At this point, Tess' effort to anticipate Angel's unexpected reaction fails.

Eventually, the event has facilitated another unwanted consequences of her decision of marrying Angel; Angel is shocked and rejects the fact that Tess' is not virgin. The burden of the disagreement between Tess' ideal world and the reality emerges when Angel, being disappointed by their marriage, decides to leave her. Tess' argument about such happening may shows us her intangibility of the reality.

Never in her life –she could swear it from the bottom of her soul– had she ever intended to do wrong; yet these hard judgements had come. Whatever her sin, they were not sins of intention, but of inadvertence, and why should she have been punished so persistently? (455)

B.3. The Struggle for Existence

In the preceding part of this chapter, we have discussed about the inevitable sufferings in the individual's life. It leads us to question the grounds of those suffering when we realize that it is only individuals that have such suffering. Since it is only individuals that have the ability to create the ideal world for their

hopes and desire, consequently they have to endeavor to live at harmony with the reality. Eventually, such efforts reveal the essence of individual's existence in the world.

We have realized that Tess has formed her hopes and desire within her ideal world. Yet she has to carry her hopes and desire through the harshness of the reality. It leads us to moments in Tess' life when a decision or choice has to be made. Through such *moment of decision* Tess' effort to achieve her desires and hopes are projected. It means that individuals' effort can, within certain limits, re-determine the direction of events even though it cannot determined the condition that make individuals' effort possible.

We have noticed that Tess' decision to tell Angel about the fact that she is not virgin is her effort to avoid the unexpected outcome of her desire to marry him. She has realized earlier that her relationship with Angel may give her some problems. Tess' previous painful experiences, such like the alienation and bitter resentment from the society, has made her recognized the possible consequences of the fact that she is not virgin. Consequently, in regard to her past experiences, Tess has provided herself with particular actions to secure her desire. Thus, within her *moment of decision* Tess has showed an endeavor to re-determine the direction of events.

Choices and decisions, that are committed within *moment of decision*, are crucial in Tess' life since they are the fundamental operations that constitute the construction of Tess' ideal world. They are the representations of Tess' intention in the world. In other words, Tess exists in the world through her choices and decisions, not merely as a living creature determined by the environment. It is Tess' decision to dedicate her life to maintain her family, not because she has been determined to sacrifice herself to the welfare of her family. It is also Tess' choice to marry Angel and to face the possible consequences of her choice; and Angel's rejection is one of the possible and predictable consequences of her choices.

Tess' capability to make choices and decision has shown us her ability to stand against the flow of environmental pressures. She has the capacity to choose in a new direction –a direction that cannot be explained or predicted by the external forces that have molded her characters. Her decision to leave Alec, despite the fact that she has been seduced, is an instance of such capacity. All girls in her society would have submitted themselves to the men who have seduced them, yet Tess decides otherwise (103).

Furthermore, it is apparent that through her choices and decision Tess has revealed an effective work upon environmental

pressures. Despite the fact that her determined world has often confined Tess' hopes and desires, she has succeeded to exist according to the way in which she becomes aware of her actual situation in the reality of her life. Jasper has prescribed the significance of such effective work as follows:

If man is to be himself, he needs a positively fulfilled world.... He must either on his own initiative independently gain possession of the mechanism of his life, or else, himself degraded to become a machine, surrender to the apparatus. (Kelly 161)

Contrary to Tess' essential decisions, Angel's decision to reject Tess since she is not virgin has shown that he has given up his authority to the mechanism of his life. Angel's loves to Tess has prevented him to divorce her. Yet his decision to leave for Brazil is a denial to the reality of his life. Despite his love to Tess, he can't bear the loss of Tess' purity and innocence in his mind. For Angel, a girl's purity is a pride in his social class. He regrets Tess' losing her purity and regards Tess as "an unapprehending peasant woman, who have never been initiated into the proportions of social things (297)."

Angel's decision to leave Tess succeeds only in deceiving himself. He has denied his authority to exist in his own way. In

other words, Angel is living in his inauthentic existence. The affirmation of Angel's existence can only be brought out by his surrounding. He has given up his own possibilities to the changes of his surrounding. It means that he has existed according to the environmental pressures upon him.

On the contrary, Tess' *struggle for existence* has revealed her authentic existence. Tess has realized that the reality of the world cannot be evaded. And the only way whereby she can secure her hopes and desires is by experiencing the harshness of the reality and playing an active part in it. Her effort to participate in her own course of life has shown that she gain control over herself. Tess' existence is not completely determined by her surrounding. However, it has provided a great deal of information for her to know the conditions for happiness, to construct the possible plans to achieve it, and to let herself being motivated by such plans.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION