



مجلة الآداب للعلوم الإنسانية
العدد 7، ديسمبر 2023، ص: 141-182
Arts and Humanities Journal
Issue 7, December 2023, Page No:
141-182

Transformation of Tess into Myth in Thomas Hardy's novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

Dr. Kamal Ismaeel Al- Gorani

Assistant Prof. English Literature
English Department, Faculty of Arts, Ibb University

kamalalgorani71@gmail.com

Mobile No: 00967 770249296

تاريخ قبوله للنشر: 2023/11/26

تاريخ استلام البحث: 2023/11/4

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Dr. Kamal Ismaeel Al- Gorani

Assistant Prof. of English Literature, English Department, Faculty of
Arts, Ibb University

Abstract

This paper analyzes Thomas Hardy's incorporation and adaptation of classical Greco-Roman myths in his novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. It examines how Hardy utilizes myths surrounding figures like Artemis, Demeter, Iphigenia, Eurydice, Penelope, and most importantly Persephone, the Queen of the Underworld to add depth and symbolism to the character of Tess and her journey. Through allusions and parallels to these myths, Hardy imbues Tess with mythic dimensions that connect her experiences to broader themes of fate, destiny, and the human condition throughout history. The research methodology utilized is a qualitative textual analysis, involving close reading of the primary text to identify mythical allusions, contextualization of referenced myths through secondary sources, comparison of literary and original mythical elements, and thematic analysis of symbolic elements and key themes. The paper identifies seven transformative processes through which Tess undergoes a symbolic transformation from an ordinary woman into a mythic figure. These include her portrayals as a suffering daughter of nature, as Persephone abducted by both Alec d'Urberville and Angel Clare, and as the sacrificed Iphigenia and Eurydice. Analysis of mythical references underscores Hardy's interest in using myth not just as ornamentation but to critically address crises of Victorian society through universal themes. By drawing parallels between Tess and mythic figures inhabiting the tragic tradition, Hardy invites readers to consider the timeless aspects of her experiences and mirrors her struggles in broader perspectives.

Keywords: Tess of the d'Urbervilles, goddess, myth, transformation, Alec, Dionysianism and Angel, Apollonianism

تحول شخصية تيس الى اسطورة في رواية "تيس او ذا دوبرفيلز"

للروائي توماس هاردي

د. كمال إسماعيل الجراني

أستاذ الأدب الإنجليزي المساعد

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، كلية الآداب، جامعة اب

ملخص البحث

يحلل هذا البحث دمج توماس هاردي للأساطير اليونانية الرومانية الكلاسيكية وتكييفها في روايته "تيس او ذا دوبرفيلز" و يدرس كيفية استخدام هاردي للأساطير المحيطة بشخصيات مثل أرتميس، وديميتر، وإيفجينيا، ويورديس، وبينلوب، والأهم من ذلك بيرسيفوني، ملكة العالم السفلي لإضافة العمق والرمزية إلى شخصية تيس ورحلتها، حيث يضيف هاردي على تيس أبعاداً أسطورية من خلال التلميحات والتشابهات مع هذه الأساطير تربط تجاربها بموضوعات أوسع تتعلق بالقدر والمصير والحالة الإنسانية عبر التاريخ، ويستخدم البحث منهجية التحليل النصي النوعي الذي يتضمن قراءة قريبة للنص الأساسي لتحديد التلميحات الأسطورية، ووضع سياق الأساطير المشار إليها من خلال مصادر ثانوية، ومقارنة العناصر الأسطورية الأدبية والأصلية، والتحليل الموضوعي للعناصر الرمزية والموضوعات الرئيسية. ويحدد البحث سبع عمليات تحويلية تمر من خلالها تيس بتحول رمزي من امرأة عادية إلى شخصية أسطورية، تشمل تصويرها على أنها تمثل معاناة ابنة الطبيعة، مثلها مثل مثيلاتها من الاساطير، كما اختطفت بيرسيفوني من قبل كل من أليك دوربرفيلز وأنجل كلير، وكإيفجينيا ويورديس المضحيتين. ويؤكد تحليل المراجع الأسطورية اهتمام هاردي باستخدام الأسطورة ليس فقط لأغراض جمالية ولكن لمعالجة أزمات المجتمع الفيكتوري بشكل نقدي من خلال موضوعات عالمية، ومن خلال رسم أوجه التشابه بين تيس والشخصيات الأسطورية التي تعيش في التقليد المأساوي، يدعو هاردي القراء إلى النظر في الجوانب الخالدة من تجاربها ويعكس نضالاتها في وجهات نظر أوسع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تيس او ذا دوبرفيلز، الآلهة، الأسطورة، التحول، شخصية إليك مجسد للديونيساينا، وشخصية إنجيل مجسد للأبولونية.

1. Introduction

Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman* (1891) is usually considered a masterpiece of English naturalistic fiction. According to Schweik, Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is considered a masterpiece of English naturalistic fiction. It is seen as the richest novel by Hardy, combining elements of both Victorian and modern literature.(127). Schweik suggests that *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* represents the culmination of Victorian texts produced during Hardy's career as a novelist. In this novel, Hardy incorporates the tragic construction found in classical playwrights but gives it a new form by merging it with elements such as multiplicity, irony, and surprise. With the infusion of intellectual influences, Hardy makes a unique contribution to the genre of the novel, marking the transition from the Victorian era to the modern era.(128)

Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* serves as a platform for him to express his criticisms of the societal issues of his time. By presenting a complex narrative and a protagonist from a lower social class, he highlights the injustices and hypocrisies that exist within the hierarchical structure of society. In this novel, Hardy explores various societal issues of his time, albeit in a more indirect manner compared to other contemporary novelists. He critiques not only social, economic, and political problems but also environmental issues, symbolized by the metaphorical rape of Persephone.

However, before giving a detailed analysis of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and the seven transformative processes through which Tess undergoes a symbolic transformation from an ordinary woman into a mythic figure, the researcher found that it is very important to begin with introducing the historical concepts of myths and their definitions.

The word myth comes from the Greek word 'mythos' meaning the story of the people, fiction, utterance, tale, and/or legend.(Legend- Synonyms dictionary). The traditional definition of myth is a widely held idea or belief that is false or incorrect, but the myth definition in literature is vastly different. In literature, the word myth is used to describe a traditional story that typically aims to explain a natural or social phenomenon. In literary myths, the use of supernatural beings is common and the time period usually dates back to a period of early history of the beginning of various civilizations.(Wikipedia)

It is worth mentioning that *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is a novel that is rich in mythological allusions and symbolism. Thomas Hardy skillfully

weaves together various ancient myths and archetypal figures, creating a complex tapestry of meaning within the story.

Therefore, myths are very important in connecting the past with the present. Houston defined myth as "something that never was but always is." (2) For Silberer myth is "the dream of the people – the dream is the myth of the individual." (118) Myths were always understood in archaic societies to be true stories and, beyond that, stories that are a most precious possession because they are sacred, exemplary, and profoundly significant. For the relationship between myths and creation Eliade (qtd. in Hartman, and Zimberoff) pointed out:

Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the 'beginnings.' In other words myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality--an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behavior, an institution. Myth, then, is always an account of a 'creation'; it relates how something was produced, began to be.(4)

Kirk's definition highlights the importance of myths not only in primitive or non-urban cultures but also in the literary culture of Western nations. He emphasizes that myths have had a lasting influence on human thought and expression throughout history. Even in a supposedly scientific age, humans still exhibit a tendency to employ quasi-mythical modes of thought, expression, and communication.(2) This suggests that myths continue to hold significance and relevance in contemporary society.

In addition, myths concern us not only for the part they play in all primitive, illiterate, tribal, or non-urban cultures; not only for the grip that versions of ancient Greek myths have gained through the centuries on the literary culture of the Western nations; but also because of man's endearing insistence on carrying quasi-mythical modes of thought, expression, and communication into a supposedly scientific age." Frye defined myth as "a legendary or a traditional story that usually concerns an event or a hero, with or without using factual or real explanations" (47). According to Burkert "Myth" is a traditional tale with secondary, partial reference to something of collective importance" (23). Bruce Louden defined myth as:

a sacred, traditional narrative, which depicts the interrelations of mortals and gods, is especially concerned with defining what is moral behavior for a given culture, and passes on key information about that culture's institutions.(9)

These particularly concern demigods or deities, and describes some rites, practices, and natural phenomenon. Typically, a myth involves historical events and supernatural beings.

In short, myths describe the various and sometimes dramatic breakthroughs of the sacred (or the 'supernatural') into the world. It is this sudden breakthrough of the sacred that really establishes the world and makes it what it is today. The foremost function of myth is to reveal the exemplary models for all human rites and all significant human activities.

Function of Myths

Myths exist in every society, as they are basic elements of human culture. The main function of myths is to teach moral lessons and explain historical events. Authors of great literary works have often taken their stories and themes from myths. Myths and their mythical symbols lead to creativity in literary works. We can understand a culture more deeply, and in a much better way, by knowing and appreciating its stories, dreams, and myths. Myths came before religions, and all religious stories are, in fact, retellings of global mythical themes. Besides literature, myths also play a great role in science, psychology, and philosophy. (Wikipedia)

Overall, myths indeed exist in every society and serve various purposes, including teaching moral lessons and explaining historical events. The influence of myths on literature, where authors often draw inspiration from mythological stories and themes, is well-recognized. Additionally, myths and their symbols stimulate creativity in literary works. Understanding and appreciating a culture's stories, dreams, and myths can provide deeper insights into that culture. It is also true that myths predate religions, and many religious stories can be seen as retellings of global mythical themes. Furthermore, myths have a significant impact on science, psychology, and philosophy, shaping our understanding of the world and human behavior.

Characteristics of Myths

Myth usually features ruling gods, goddesses, deities, and heroes having god-like-qualities, but status lower than gods. Often, the daughter or son of a god (such as Percy Jackson) is fully mortal, and these characters have supernatural abilities and powers that raise them above average human beings. Thus, we can say that myth, at its most basic level, is a story that aims to explain a specific culture's beliefs, origin, or purpose. While the content of myths will vary from culture to

culture, there are some defining characteristics common to all myths. Most myths contain some or all of the following characteristics:

- **Deities:** In almost every culture/religion, there is some type of ruling force or group of forces that are in control of everything from human behavior to the weather. These deities could be gods, goddesses, or supernatural animals. For example, in Egyptian, Greek, and Roman mythology, there was a pantheon, or family of gods, that ruled over specific areas and people. Sometimes the deities were helpful, and other times, they caused significant mischief and hardship. Similar divine families exist in Native American, Japanese, Irish, and other cultures' myths, as well. (Wikipedia)
- **Heroes:** There are various tales that center around a hero, who is lower in status than a god but sometimes has supernatural powers. They could be a relative to a god, like in the case of Percy Jackson or Odysseus, blessed with a divine skill, or simply a superhuman trait of some kind. In most cases, a hero must embark on a quest to obtain an object, or get to an important location to prove themselves worthy to the gods.
- **Explanations of natural phenomena:** Many myths aim to explain natural occurrences, such as the color of the sky, weather patterns, and agriculture; also the Chinese myths about Ba, the drought goddess, were used to help people pray for rain, and many more. The explanations can also extend to societal norms and values.
- **Oral tradition:** Since ancient myths were created during a time when language was limited and there were little to no writing systems, most myths were passed down through spoken word. These stories became a rite of passage for many young folks, learning everything from their religious beliefs and correct worship practices, to historical information regarding their land, their people, and the world around them.(Wikipedia)

Myth and Mythology

A myth in literature is a story passed down from generation to generation that attempts to explain an origin or natural occurrence in the world. While these definitions begin to shape the picture of the concept of myth, it begs several questions about mythology in literature. (Wikipedia)

Mythology

When academics attempt to define mythology, they are looking at a collection of myths that typically belong to a specific cultural tradition,

religion, or tribe/clan. From indigenous tribes in the Americas and Australia to Celtic clans and the early Egyptians, various civilizations have a wealth of mythology to each specific cultural group. Most know the famous myths from the Greeks, such as the myth of Sisyphus, the myth of Narcissus, Pandora's box, Icarus flying too close to the sun, and many more. While these stories may seem far-fetched or supernatural by nature, a large part of differing mythologies is to not only preserve culture and origin stories, but to teach lessons to the youth about their culture. These ancient stories that exist on all inhabitable continents are passed down through time to help people understand themselves, their past, and even their future.(Wikipedia)

2. The Character of Tess in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman* (1891) is usually considered a masterpiece of English naturalistic fiction. According to Schweik, Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is considered a masterpiece of English naturalistic fiction. It is seen as the richest novel by Hardy, combining elements of both Victorian and modern literature.(127). Schweik suggests that *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* represents the culmination of Victorian texts produced during Hardy's career as a novelist. In this novel, Hardy incorporates the tragic construction found in classical playwrights but gives it a new form by merging it with elements such as multiplicity, irony, and surprise. With the infusion of intellectual influences, Hardy makes a unique contribution to the genre of the novel, marking the transition from the Victorian era to the modern era.(128)

When *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was first published, it was seen as a revolutionary novel that aligned with the emerging literary trend of naturalism. Naturalism, which originated in France, emphasized the subordination of characters to unseen and powerful forces such as fate and the laws of nature. These forces placed characters in a harsh and unforgiving environment, where they had to struggle for survival. In this novel, Hardy incorporates naturalistic elements by portraying Tess as a character who is subject to these invisible forces. She faces numerous hardships and struggles, often driven by circumstances beyond her control. This depiction aligns with the naturalistic philosophy that individuals are shaped and influenced by their environment and the forces that govern it.

In addition, Hardy's novel, therefore, can be viewed as a realistic portrayal of the naturalistic movement, presenting characters who are at the mercy of powerful and uncontrollable forces in their struggle for survival. Tess experiences the cruelty of nature and the impossibility of escaping the consequences of her social and genetic degradation. She begins as a simple country girl and becomes a single mother, burdened with a turbulent past. She is then abandoned by her husband, Angel, on their wedding night and is forced into a relationship with Alec for the sake of her family's welfare.

Furthermore, Hardy's portrayal of Tess embodies the three archetypes of women that are characteristic of his fiction. She represents the common natural woman who desires nothing more than a simple life, the young woman ready for marriage, and the female fatal who takes pleasure in seducing men. Tess is portrayed in her triple essence, encompassing her womanhood and victimhood, as well as her love and sexuality. This complex construction of her character remains consistent throughout the novel, from the opening scene on May Day until the inevitable conclusion where she must fulfill her destiny.

Here, Hardy's depiction of Tess reflects the deterministic nature of naturalism, where characters are subject to external forces and circumstances beyond their control. Tess's experiences and struggles exemplify the harsh realities and limitations imposed upon individuals by their environment and social circumstances.

Thomas Hardy's approach to addressing environmental, social, economic, and political issues in his novel is very effective. Hardy's critique of these issues is less direct compared to writers like Dickens, Kingsley, Trollope, and Gaskell. Instead of presenting them as root causes, Hardy views them as further symptoms of the problems prevalent in his era.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles is a complex novel that goes beyond being a simple morality tale. Depending on how it is approached, readers can identify the author's comments and concerns about modernity. This includes the shift in society where titles and nobility, which were previously inherited, could now be bought. The novel can also be seen as an emotional outcry against the double standards present in Victorian society, which was gradually declining during that time. (Ahrman 3)

Generally speaking, Hardy's condemnation of the hierarchical society is evident in his choice to give his heroine, Tess, a simple peasant's life and upbringing. This challenges the foundations of a society driven by pride and prejudice. The publication of the book in 1891 sparked various reactions, some of which were objective in nature. Therefore, Hardy's approach to addressing these issues is not through presenting them as root

causes but rather as symptomatic of a larger problem. The novel's complexity goes beyond being a simple morality tale and allows readers to interpret it in different ways. One possible interpretation is that Hardy comments on modernity, where social status and nobility could be acquired through wealth rather than inheritance. Additionally, the novel can be seen as a critique of the double standards prevalent in Victorian society, which was gradually declining during that time. Hardy's novel serves as a platform for him to express his concerns and criticisms about the issues plaguing his era.

Indeed, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* challenges the societal standards and conventions of its time. As Irving Howe noted, Tess goes against the expectations placed upon her in Victorian society. Thomas Hardy portrays Tess not simply as a peasant girl, but as a figure reminiscent of the Madonna, symbolizing her purity and suffering. Despite her hardships, Tess is depicted as a strong and noble individual, possessing qualities of goodness and intelligence that rival those of the typical Victorian gentleman hero. This portrayal of Tess as a complex and morally upright character further adds to the novel's depth and impact. (Ahrman 4)

In the opening scene of the novel, Tess is introduced as an innocent country girl, full of vitality and optimism. The ritual of the village's spring celebration serves as the backdrop for her introduction. Dressed in white along with the other women and girls, Tess exudes a sense of purity and freshness. The atmosphere is filled with hope and joy, symbolizing the potential and possibilities that lie ahead for Tess. Hardy's description of her captures this youthful energy and the anticipation of a bright future:

She was a fine and handsome girl – not handsomer than some others, possibly – but her mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes added eloquence to colour and shape. She wore a red ribbon in her hair, and was the only one of the white company who could boast of such a pronounced adornment . (Tess 4)⁽¹⁾

Here, Hardy's description of Tess's appearance in this scene is manifested on the way he is noting the significance of Tess being the only one wearing a red ribbon during the village ritual. This detail suggests that she is singled out or chosen, foreshadowing that significant events are destined to occur in her life. The red color of the ribbon can symbolize both love and blood, hinting at the dual nature of Tess's experiences and the potential for both romantic passion and hardship. By painting a vivid

(1)Hardy, Thomas. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. New York: Norton, 1991. (All textual references to Hardy's novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* are taken from this edition)

picture of Tess and her surroundings, the author sets the stage for the unfolding of the novel's narrative and themes:

Tess Durbeyfield at this time of her life was a mere vessel of emotion untinged by experience. The dialect was on her tongue to some extent, despite the village school: the characteristic intonation of that dialect for this district being the voicing approximately rendered by the syllable UR, probably as rich an utterance as any to be found in human speech. The pouted-up deep red mouth to which this syllable was native had hardly as yet settled into its definite shape, and her lower lip had a way of thrusting the middle of her top one upward, when they closed together after a word. (Tess 8)

Here, the description of Tess's mouth not yet having settled into its definite shape can be interpreted in a couple of ways. It could suggest that Tess is still in a formative stage, not fully defined or hardened by the experiences and challenges she will face. This leaves open the possibility that she may undergo changes and transformations as the story progresses. Moreover, in the case of Tess, her innocence and vulnerability are contrasted with the attention given to her physical features. This can create a tension between her inner qualities and the way she is perceived by others. Additionally, the repeated focus on her mouth and lips may imply a certain sensuality or potential for temptation. The objectification of Tess in the novel raises questions about the author's intentions and the portrayal of female characters in literature.

[...] he stood up and held it by the stem to her mouth. "No - no!" She said quickly, putting her fingers between his hand and her lips. "I would rather take it in my own hand." "Nonsense!" he insisted; and in a slight distress she parted her lips and took it in. (Tess 36)

The behavior of Alec in this scene also reveals his character and attitude towards women. His persistence in pursuing Tess despite her initial hesitation demonstrates a disregard for her autonomy and boundaries. This further emphasizes the societal norm where men are seen as the authority figures and women are expected to comply with their wishes. Besides, by highlighting these power dynamics and gender norms, the novel raises important questions about the role of women in society and the limitations they face in asserting their own agency. It invites readers to critically examine the unequal power dynamics between men and women and the consequences they have on individual lives.

Overall, the depiction of the rape scene in the novel serves to illustrate the power dynamics, the vulnerability of women, and the consequences of societal norms. It invites readers to reflect on the themes of consent, agency, and the treatment of women within the context of the story.

According to Rosmarie (22) Many critics over the years have discussed whether she actually is raped, if she is to some extent to be blamed for being ignorant. The following passage from Hardy's Novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* shows the controversial scene in which Tess is raped by Alec. It is indeed a significant and intense moment in the novel that has sparked debates among critics regarding the nature of the act and Tess's culpability. Hardy, however, in this part of the novel, makes it absolutely clear that she is raped:

Why was it that upon this beautiful feminine tissue, sensitive as gossamer, and practically blank as snow as yet, there should have been traced such a coarse pattern as it was doomed to receive ; [---] As Tess's own people down in those retreats are never tired of saying among each other in their fatalistic way: "It was to be." There lay the pity of it. (Tess 68-9)

The passage underscores the innocence and vulnerability of Tess, describing her as a "beautiful feminine tissue, sensitive as gossamer, and practically blank as snow." This emphasizes her purity and lack of experience. The reference to the birds, rabbits, and hares as victims, along with the fatalistic statement of "It was to be" among Tess's own people, further solidifies the idea that Tess is an innocent victim. The passage highlights the tragedy of her situation, where she is preyed upon by Alec, who takes advantage of his position as her supposed cousin. In fact, the act committed by Alec against Tess is explicitly described as a rape, and the circumstances surrounding it, including Tess's trust in him, make it even more devastating. This sets the stage for the difficult situations Tess will face and the consequences that follow.

Again, when Tess first meets Angel, she remembers that she actually has seen him before, at the May-dance. However, he did not dance with her. Now when they work at the same place she grows more and more fond of him. He eventually shows interest in her too. At dawn, when they are milking:

It was then, as has been said, that she impressed him most deeply. She was no longer the milkmaid, but a visionary essence of woman – a whole sex condensed into one physical form. He called her Artemis, Demeter and other fanciful names half teasingly, which she did not like because she did not understand them. "Call me Tess," she would say askance; and he did. (Tess 125-26)

In this passage, it is evident that Angel sees Tess in a romanticized and idealized manner. He views her not just as a milkmaid but as a symbol of femininity, representing the essence of womanhood. He even gives her names associated with Greek mythical goddesses, further emphasizing his perception of her as an ideal figure. However, it is important to note

that Angel's perception of Tess as an idealized woman does not necessarily mean he sees her as an object. It can be seen as a reflection of his own romantic and idealistic nature. He may be infatuated with the idea of a perfect woman rather than truly understanding and appreciating Tess as an individual with her own complexities and flaws.

Angel is more in love with the image of a perfect woman, than Tess herself, which is obvious in this part. She is merely an object to him since he compares her with Greek mythical goddesses. It is not possible for Tess to be perfect since she is a living person, with a past. She cannot live up to his standards which are unreal and therefore impossible to achieve. This is oppression from men at its worst. In her critical discussion on this point Jonasdottir, (1994) cited, *Why women are oppressed*, Serena Jones, quotes D.H. Lawrence:

Man is willing to accept woman as an equal, as a man in skirts, as an angel, a devil, a baby-face, a machine, an instrument, a bosom, a womb, a pair of legs, a servant, an encyclopedia, an ideal or an obscenity; the only thing he won't accept her as is a human being, a real human being of the real sex. (15)

The quote from D.H. Lawrence further emphasizes the societal tendency to categorize and limit women based on narrow stereotypes and expectations. It suggests that men are willing to accept women in various roles and roles, but not as equal human beings deserving of respect and agency. This discussion raises important points about the objectification and oppression of women, and how societal expectations and perceptions can limit their autonomy and deny their full humanity.

Furthermore, it can be said that Tess is now in a situation she cannot do much about. She is in love with Angel, and she wants to be happy. Tess does not see the signs of oppression. Serena Jones, further points out:

On the negative side, however, feminists recognize that harms done to women by oppression are real and can be emotionally and physically damaging. This damage can affect one's ability to analyze the oppression from which one suffers. (15)

Here, Hardy wanted stress on the double standards that were present in Tess's society. The differential treatment between Tess and Angel in regards to their pasts highlights the unequal expectations placed on men and women. While Angel's past is forgiven and overlooked, Tess is judged and rejected based on her own history. This discrepancy reflects the societal norms and expectations that often place a heavier burden of morality and purity on women. Women are often held to stricter standards of behavior and are judged more harshly for any perceived transgressions. This gender-based oppression and victimization is a

recurring theme throughout the novel. In other words, Tess's experience exemplifies the ways in which women are disadvantaged and oppressed due to their gender. It illustrates the unfairness and injustice that arises from the unequal treatment and expectations placed on women in society. Tess's victimization highlights the need for a more equitable and just society that does not discriminate based on gender or hold women to different standards than men.

Tess leaves Angel, to go back to her parent's house which is the only thing for her to do, considering the circumstances'. While living there, Alec constantly hunts for her, trying to persuade her to be his woman. He even asks her to marry him but she denies the proposal. He is obsessed with her and does not give up until he gets what he wants. Eventually she does not find a way, other than to do what he asks her to, to come and live with him, since he has been helping her family. This situation highlights the power dynamics and coercion that Tess experiences at the hands of Alec. Despite her resistance and refusal to be with him, Alec persists in his pursuit and uses his influence to pressure her into complying with his desires. This imbalance of power, coupled with the desperate circumstances that Tess finds herself in, leaves her with limited options.

Tess's decision to ultimately give in to Alec's demands can be seen as a result of the oppressive and manipulative environment she finds herself in. It is a reflection of the limited agency and autonomy she has as a woman in her society, where her choices are constrained by the actions and desires of men with more power and influence. Besides, this portrayal underscores the ways in which women like Tess are victimized and oppressed, unable to fully escape the control and manipulation of men in positions of power. It highlights the importance of addressing and challenging the structures and systems that perpetuate such forms of oppression and exploitation.

As soon as she got out of the village she entered a thicket and took from her basket one of the old field-gowns which she had never put on even at the dairy – never since she had worked among the stubble at Marlott. She also, by a felicitous thought, took a handkerchief from her bundle and tied it round her face under her bonnet, covering her chin and half her cheeks and temples, as if she were suffering from toothache. (Tess 275)

This passage underscores the impact of societal beauty standards and the pressures faced by women to conform to certain ideals. Hence, at the end of the story Tess and Angel end up at Stonehenge where she lays to rest on the stone altar before the men come to get her. Angel wants her to get up and flee, but Tess is satisfied and tells him:

“One of my mother’s people was a shepherd hereabouts, now I think of it. And you used to say at Talbothays that I was a heathen. So now I am at home.” (Tess 387)

Finally, the novel raises important questions about culpability, agency, and the forces that shape individuals' lives. It invites readers to examine the larger social and cultural context in which Tess's story unfolds and consider the multiple factors that contribute to her tragic fate.

3. Tess as a myth: The Processes of the Transformation of Tess from an ordinary suffering woman into a myth

The use of myths in nineteenth-century literature indeed served a purpose beyond mere ornamentation. It played a significant role in addressing the crises of faith and the challenges posed by empiricism during that time. In this way, as Bonaparte illustrated, victorian authors adopted a mythical approach to fiction “not to imitate the world but to reconstruct it conceptually”(417). The Enlightenment era had brought about a decline in religious belief and a growing secularization of society. This crisis of faith left many individuals searching for new sources of meaning and purpose. By incorporating myths into their works, authors sought to tap into the timeless and universal themes found in mythology, providing readers with a sense of transcendence and a connection to something larger than themselves.

Additionally, the rise of empiricism in philosophy presented a challenge to traditional notions of knowledge and truth. Empiricism emphasized the importance of sensory perception as the only reliable source of knowledge, leading to skepticism and a reductionist view of human experience. In response to this, authors turned to myths as a way to explore deeper truths and to counter the limitations of empiricist thought. Mythology offered a conceptual framework that allowed for a broader understanding of human existence and the complexities of the world. (Bonaparte 6)

In this respect, it can be said that Tess herself can be seen as embodying multiple mythological figures and themes. She is associated with goddesses like Artemis and Persephone, symbolizing her connection to nature and her journey through darkness and transformation. Tess's experiences of victimization and sacrifice also echo the stories of Iphigenia and Eurydice, highlighting the tragic fate that befalls her. Prof. Kundu pointed out:

It is indeed fascinating to see how the various myths of Artemis, Persephone, Europa, Demeter, Niobe, Daphne, Iphigenia, Eurydice, Penelope, Cybele, Ceres, Lotis, Eve, as well as Pluto,

Priapus, Mephistopheles, Antinous, Apollo, Orpheus, Odysseus – in addition to the myths of kinship, cursed house, ancestral sin – have been evoked in a rich interwoven and layered pattern.(91)

In this connection, Mishra Suman in her essay on Hardy's "Tess of the D'Urbervilles", Depicting Tess " As the Female Protagonist of 19th century Victorian England pointed out:

Tess is the noble's protagonist and she is the pivot around which the story of Tess of the d'Urbervilles rotates. Tess is intelligent, strikingly attractive and distinguished by her deep moral sensitivity and passionate intensely. She is more than a distinctive individual. Hardy makes her into somewhat of a mythic heroine. The narrator himself sometimes describes Tess as more than an individual woman, but a something closer to a mythical incarnation of womanhood. She is the novel's protagonist, a beautiful, loyal young woman living with her impoverished family in the village of Marlott.(2)

Similarly, the male characters in the novel, such as Alec and Angel, can be seen as representing mythological figures like Pluto and Apollo, each with their own destructive or idealized qualities that impact Tess's life. It is noticed that the presence of these mythological allusions adds depth and complexity to the novel, allowing for multiple interpretations and layers of meaning. They help to highlight the timeless themes of fate, destiny, and the human condition that are central to the story. Besides, by drawing on these ancient myths and archetypes, Hardy not only enriches the narrative but also invites readers to consider the universal and timeless aspects of Tess's story, connecting her experiences to broader themes and human experiences throughout history.

For the female subjectivity and the role of gender in the novel, Chris Weeden in her book, *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, outlines female subjectivity as "the product of the society and culture in which we live... (that) changes with shifts in the wide range of discursive fields which constitutes them" (33). Such change which she refers is only possible through self-initiatives and choices. Before Victorian society's prime demand of superficial 'purity' solely based on 'body' or virginity of women, Tess exemplifies alternative shifts for 'purity' concept in psychological as well as ethical terms through her innocence and sheer sense of responsibility which in turn exhilarates her subjectivity construction. There are ample references regarding this in Hardy's text like Tess's intense sense of responsibility becomes evident in her journey with horse Prince and her ethical purity becomes explicit as she considers herself responsible Prince's death: "Tis all my doing– all mine!... No excuse for me– none" (Tess 39). It is her ethics which prompts her for self-condemnation although it was not her fault at all as she slept solely

for her tiredness, not for her lack of sincerity. Regarding this Schweik in his article, "Moral Perspective in Tess of the D'Urbervilles" asserts that "moral responsibility which troubles her after the accident" proves her purity not fallenness as Tess "is hardly responsible for the accident which kills the Durbeyfield horse" (17-18). Rather it can be considered as the fault of Mr. Durbeyfield whose over-drunkenness put Tess in such situation. However, in that tough circumstance too Tess's concern was sole for her family's livelihood for which she has uttered, "What will mother and father live on now? Aby, Aby!" (Tess 39). This undoubtedly reflects her purity of soul not fallenness.

After an intensive reading and a profound study of the novel and reviewing a great deal of researches, interpretations and analyses from different critics and intellectuals, it seems to the researcher that Thomas Hardy wanted to make his female protagonist, Tess, undergo seven-significant processes of transformation throughout the novel that are responsible for transforming her from an ordinary woman, or a fallen woman as some critics call her, into a myth. These processes are as follows:

Process I: Transformation of Tess into a Suffering Daughter of Nature

This process involves Tess's transformation from an ordinary woman into a figure who embodies the suffering and connection with nature. Hardy portrays Tess as inherently connected to the natural world, emphasizing her natural beauty and authenticity. As the novel progresses, Tess's suffering intensifies, reflecting the hardships and injustices she faces as a result of societal expectations and patriarchal dominance. This suffering is juxtaposed with her deep connection to the earth, highlighting her role as a "daughter of nature." Through this process, Tess becomes a symbol of the inherent struggles and resilience of women in the face of societal oppression. Her transformation into a suffering daughter of nature contributes to her mythological status within the novel.

Tess's natural beauty is emphasized throughout the novel, with Hardy describing her physical features as authentically beautiful and in harmony with the natural world. This portrayal suggests that Tess's beauty is not just superficial, but rather a reflection of her deep connection to the earth and her inherent goodness. It also serves to contrast Tess with the artificiality and superficiality of the secular world. (Yuan-Yuan & Yan Rao 7)

By presenting Tess as a daughter of nature, Hardy challenges the societal norms and expectations imposed on women. He suggests that women, like Tess, possess a unique intimacy with the earth and are intrinsically

connected to the cycle of life. This portrayal aligns with feminist perspectives that emphasize the importance of recognizing and valuing women's inherent connection to nature and their role in nurturing and sustaining life. In this connection, Yuan-Yuan & Yan Rao pointed out:

Through Tess's close affinity with nature, Hardy not only reveals his feminist consciousness but also explores themes of authenticity, beauty, and the destructive consequences of patriarchal society. Tess's journey in the novel can be seen as a struggle to maintain her connection to her natural self in the face of societal pressures and expectations. (9)

By emphasizing Tess's connection with nature, Hardy highlights her innate qualities and challenges the societal norms that seek to suppress them. Tess's authenticity is contrasted with the artificiality and superficiality of the secular world, suggesting that her connection to nature represents a truer and more genuine form of beauty.

According to Quin Liu, Tess's close affinity with nature serves as a means for Hardy to delve into themes of authenticity, beauty, and the impact of patriarchal society. Tess's journey can be interpreted as a struggle to preserve her true self in the face of societal expectations, shedding light on the complexities of gender dynamics and the challenges faced by women in a patriarchal world. (24)

Tess made her first debut in the novel as a dancer in the “club-walking” of the village. In the band of beautiful young girls, Tess was outstanding in her own natural way. “She was a fine and handsome girl---not handsomer than some others, possibly---but her mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes added eloquence to colour and shape. She wore a red ribbon in her hair, and was the only one of the white company who could boast of such a pronounced adornment. (Tess14)

Despite her distinctiveness, Tess is initially seen by most as just a fine and picturesque country girl. Only a small minority, particularly strangers, are captivated by her natural freshness and admire her beauty. This reflects the tendency of society to overlook the unique qualities and inner beauty of individuals in favor of superficial judgments:

Phases of her childhood lurked in her aspect still. As she walked along today, for her bouncing handsome womanliness, you could sometimes see her twelfth year in her cheeks, or her ninth sparkling from her eyes; and even her fifth would flit over the curves of her mouth now and then. (Tess14)

Hardy's description of Tess's appearance in her first appearance sets the stage for her journey in the novel. It establishes her natural beauty and innocence, as well as the societal perceptions and judgments that she will

navigate throughout the story. Tess's embodiment of nature is evident not only in her physical appearance but also in her personality. She possesses a duality that reflects the societal expectations placed upon her as a woman in a patriarchal society. On one hand, Tess is tolerant and docile, conforming to the traditional gender roles expected of her. On the other hand, she displays boldness and defiance, challenging societal norms.

Tess's connection with nature is strengthened through her engagement in farm work. She is portrayed as hardworking and skilled in various agricultural tasks, which not only supports herself and her family but also reinforces her identity as a daughter of nature. The novel emphasizes that Tess's abilities in farm work are innate and bestowed upon her by nature. Tess D'Urbervilles is a suffering daughter of nature, she has an uncanny similarity with nature, and she is the womanized nature, therefore, Tess is naturalized in the whole novel(QinLiu.24).

Tess first appears in her "natural home" in the small hamlet of Marlott, where her innocence is dramatized as she takes part in the May Day dance. May day dance is a ritual celebrated by the Victorians to show the fertility of nature and the arrival of spring, by women wearing white dress with flowers and a red ribbon on it which also symbolizes their newness and beauty. (Disy 5):

Some spirit within her rose automatically as the sap in the twigs. It was unexpected youth, surging up anew after its temporary check, and binging with it hope, and the invincible instinct towards self-deligent. (Tess 91)

For the symbolic significance of the red color Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat pointed out:

The abundance of the colour red here reflects the correlation between demise and beauty, suffering, agony and seduction, physical torture and the sexual bond. For Tess, red symbolizes love which is a fierce destructive, unpredictable passion that works against loyalty and frustrates those who possess it. (4)

Tess's first appearance in the novel, taking part in the May Day dance in her "natural home" of Marlott, further underscores her connection with nature. The May Day dance symbolizes fertility and the arrival of spring, with women dressed in white adorned with flowers and a red ribbon. Tess's presence in this ritual highlights her newness and beauty, aligning her with the natural world and emphasizing her role as a naturalized figure throughout the novel. In his discussion on Tess and nature in chapter II, Nimrod stated:

Tess's earthly divinity is not only demonstrated through her interactions with animals and the close relationship between her

form and the surrounding provinciality, but Hardy also paints an image of her that makes her seem born not of people, but of the land. Her pale skin is often compared to the pale dawn; at one point her hair is described as "earth-coloured"; Alec calls her lips "hollyberry lips." (16)

After her first meeting with Alec d'Urberville, she finds herself:

Stuffed with roses, resembling a rose-garden come to life: "roses at her breast; roses in her hat; roses [...] in her basket to the brim." (Tess 31)

The symbolism of Tess as a representation of nature is at times extended to include all her gender, as in this extract found during her temporary employment as field worker:

But those of the other sex were the most interesting of this company of binders, by reason of the charm which is acquired by woman when she becomes part and parcel of outdoor nature, and is not merely an object set down therein as at ordinary times. A field-man is a personality afield; a field woman is a portion of the field; she has somehow lost her own margin, imbibed the essence of her surrounding, and assimilated herself with it. (Tess 68)

There is a sensitivity in Tess that sets her apart from the other inhabitants. Shame for her father's drunken condition makes her volunteer to take the beehives to market, and despair for the laziness of her parents makes her dreamily watch the passing landscape and ignore where she is going. When, as a result, the horse Prince is killed, Tess's sense of duty to her family, now in economic difficulties, overcomes her pride, and she agrees to go to her aristocratic relatives for help. It is her first journey outside the little world of Marlott and her first real encounter with corruption. Alec, her cousin, is a stock figure of the sophisticated, anti-natural world. Their first scene together is formalized into an archetypal image of innocence in the grasp of the corrupt. (Yuan-Yuan & Yan Rao 7)

Once in the novel, she intentionally isolated herself in the woods for a long time while all the people thought she had gone forever, she only chose to step out from the woods after dark. In the woods, she fully freed herself and gained all the vigour and strength from the nature to fight against all the hardships in the real life:

... and it was then, when out in the woods, that she seemed least solitary. She knew how to hit a hair's-breadth that moment of evening when the light and darkness are so evenly balanced that the constraint of day and the suspense of night neutralize each other, leaving absolute mental liberty. (Tess 77)

It is noted that Tess often finds solace and vitality in nature, seeking refuge from the hardships and disappointments of human relationships.

She has an inherent distrust of people and frequently feels let down by the real world. As a result, she relies heavily on nature to provide her with consolation and a sense of freedom. In addition, Tess's reliance on nature and her sense of belonging to the natural world highlight her disillusionment with human relationships and her search for solace and freedom. Her affinity with nature serves as a means of escape and offers her a sense of inner peace and vitality. In regard, Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat pointed out:

Thomas Hardy usually depicts and contrasts human misery, personal crisis and social conflicts against a background of frequently grim, dismal weather and natural forces which seem bent on crushing a sensitive and imaginative individual. In the case of Tess of the d'Urbervilles, nature remains apparently immune to the protagonist's suffering or gradually suppresses and overwhelms her. On the other hand, Tess herself constitutes the essence of nature, protecting its purity and innocence against the invasion of civilization, and against man's violence and savagery.(5)

Process II: Transformation of Tess into Persephone, the Daughter of Demeter, and the victim of both Alec d'Urbervilles (Dionysus / Mephistopheles) and Angel Clare (Apollo)

It is worth mentioning that the likening the fate of Tess and her journey to the fate of Persephone is the general frame reference of our novel, Tess as a whole. The structure of the novel is revolved upon the Greek myth, which is the myth of Persephone. The 19th century writers employ or write about myths. Myth was widely spread among them in poetry and in novel, so myths are not something ornament (small); these writers have encountered and have used myths as a means of addressing crisis that have encountered the whole age of the 19th century. Indeed, the structure of the novel revolves around this myth, with Tess embodying the role of Persephone, the daughter of Demeter.

In Greek mythology, Persephone is abducted by Hades and taken to the underworld, becoming the queen of the underworld. This abduction represents a loss of innocence and a descent into darkness. Similarly, Tess experiences a similar transformation in her life, becoming a victim of both Alec d'Urbervilles and Angel Clare. Here, Alec d'Urbervilles can be seen as a symbol of Dionysus or Mephistopheles, representing the darker and more sensual aspects of Tess's journey. He seduces and ultimately violates Tess, leading to her loss of innocence and descent into a world of suffering. Angel Clare, on the other hand, can be associated with Apollo, representing the ideal of beauty, reason, and intellect. Despite his initial attraction to Tess, Angel ultimately rejects her due to

societal pressures and his own idealistic notions. This rejection further contributes to Tess's transformation and her tragic fate.

By aligning Tess with Persephone, Hardy explores themes of innocence lost, the destructive power of desire, and the constraints of societal expectations. The use of Greek mythology allows him to delve deeper into these themes and provide a broader context for understanding Tess's journey.

Tess as Persephone, the Daughter of Demeter

A darkly prophetic undercurrent imbues the revised club-walk episode, foreshadowing the fierce polemical purpose of later chapters in which Hardy addresses the relationship between virginity, fecundity and purity; and life, death and rebirth. His placing of the mythological motif near the start of the novel creates an expectation that Tess, like Ceres the Italo-Roman goddess of agriculture identified with the Greek Demeter, will suffer traumatic loss and grief; and, like Persephone, in her overall aspect of unblemished maidenhood, will endure physical violation at the hands of a sexually predatory stranger (Alec d'Urberville), and make a symbolic visit to the underworld. (Radford 92)

In the similar context, Felicia Bonaparte draws on the parallel between Persephone and Tess. Bonaparte argues that Tess is a manifestation of the ancient Greek goddess Persephone: she aligns Tess's experience with Alec with Persephone's experiences with Hades (415). The story of Persephone in the forms we receive it from Classical Antiquity is not a tragedy—and Persephone herself is not a tragic heroine. Nonetheless, there are several allusions to the myth that allows reading Tess of the d'Urbervilles as an “enactment in modern dress of [Persephone's] mythic rites and history” (415). Bonaparte argues that the novel aims to redress the myth of Demeter and Persephone, with the characters unaware of their roles. However, reading the novel as such ignores the possible contemporary political and social ideas put forth by Tess as a tragic sacrificial character. Bonaparte's comparison of Tess and Persephone is helpful in recognizing the sacrificial characteristics that Tess has. But, while Tess and Persephone share many qualities, Tess is not a direct reconstruction of the Classical goddess.

Persephone must remain with Hades for one third of the year (Homer 463-4), while she spends the other two thirds of the year with her mother (Homer 465); Tess, on the other hand, has no such return to her natal family. Demeter's anger at having been separated from her daughter, and her prevention of the natural cycle of growth has no clear parallel in Tess's story. Only in Persephone's yearly return to the underworld, her death, a sacrifice so that she can return to her mother again and with her

return ensure the prosperity of the world, is there some parallel to the story of Tess: Tess sacrifices herself to Alec in order to ensure the prosperity of her family.

For the purpose of reinforcing the close relationship between the story of Persephone and her fate and that of Tess, the researcher would like to refer to the story of the myth of Persephone and her mother Demeter as taken from the two sources, The Homeric to Demeter and Ovid's *Metamorphose* and make the connection between the two narrations of the myth and the character of Tess as depicted to incarnate Persephone.

The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

The Homeric Hymn to Demeter is the oldest surviving version of the myth and seems to be the most well-known account of Persephone's story (Lincoln 224). The Homeric Hymns weren't actually written by Homer – they are a collection of thirty-four anonymous poems written in the same epic style and meter. Most of them are thought to have been written between 700 BCE to 500 BCE. They were written to be sung or recited in honour of the gods (Raynor14).

The Homeric Hymn to Demeter is dedicated to the titular goddess and tells the story of her and her daughter Persephone, while also providing a mythical explanation for the seasons. This version places the least amount of emphasis on Persephone, since the poem is written for and about Demeter (Greek goddess of harvest and agriculture). The Hymn opens with the line:

"I sing of the revered goddess, rich-haired Demeter, and her slim-ankled daughter, whom Hades snatched (far-seeing, thundering Zeus gave her away)" (Hom. Hymn Dem. 1-3, trans. Raynor)

Zeus and Hades have come to an agreement and concocted a plan for Hades to kidnap Persephone as his bride, making her queen of the Underworld at his side. Their plan was obviously made without consulting Persephone or Demeter on the matter. The following actions are often referred to as the rape of Persephone. Also, unique to The Homeric Hymn to Demeter is a beautiful flower Zeus plants in order to trap Persephone. As she bends to pick the flower, Hades, who has been hiding in wait, grabs her and whisks her away in his chariot. Persephone screams, and her shout rings out across the world. She's heard by both Hecate and Helios, two other gods, who offer her no help.

The *Encyclopedia of World Religions* describes Helios as both the god and personification of the sun in Greek mythology (394), and Hecate as an Underworld goddess associated with magic, spells, and crossroads (419).

The scream eventually reaches Demeter, who begins to fiercely search for her daughter. After speaking to both Hecate and Helios, Demeter is told by the god of the sun that Persephone was taken to be Hades' wife and that Zeus orchestrated her capture. Helios also attempts to convince Demeter that Hades is not a bad match for Persephone, saying:

"But, Goddess, give up your strong grief; let go of your infinite anger. Hades is not an unsuitable son-in-law among the gods: Lord of the Many Dead, your own brother from the same seed. As for honor, he won the third share when the division was made and lives as king among those in his allotted land." (Hom. Hymn Dem. 82-87, trans. Raynor)

This goes to show how much power of men is valued over the opinion and safety of women - as Helios believes that the power and prestige Hades and his lineage hold should be considered enough to make him a good husband. However, much of the hymn from this point focuses on Demeter. As the goddess of grain and harvest, she stops the growth of all the plants and crops so that the Earth is barren and the humans have no food to harvest or sell. Zeus realizes he'll need to appeal to Demeter to end this barren period on earth. Demeter responds to Zeus with an ultimatum; she will only allow things to grow if Persephone is returned to her. Zeus sends Hermes to the Underworld with this request. In these lines she is only described in relation to Hades:

"Lord Hades in his house sitting in bed with his revered wife, still unwilling and longing for her mother." (Hom. Hymn Dem. 342-344, trans. Raynor)

Surprisingly, Hades responds by telling Persephone to go to her mother, encouraging her to think kindly of him and reminding her she will always have power in the Underworld. Hades tricks Persephone into eating a pomegranate seed from the Underworld so that she is unable to permanently return to her mother, because eating food from the Underworld binds her to it. Hades then take his chariot to Demeter's side in the world of the living. Demeter is happy to have her child back, but asks if she ate the food, explaining that she will have to divide her time between the Underworld and the realm of the living if she did. Persephone tells Demeter that Hades tricked her into eating the seed, as well as how he initially kidnapped her. Zeus agrees to the arrangement of splitting Persephone's time between the realms so he can keep both Hades and Demeter happy. Demeter and Persephone then embrace and are thrilled to be back together. Hecate, the goddess who had previously heard Persephone's cry, becomes a companion of the young goddess. Here, Hecate's role is the goddess of boundaries and crossroads, and Persephone now represents a crossing of boundaries. She lives at an

eternal crossroads of life and death, the realm of the living and the realm of the dead, of being the innocent daughter and the queen of the Underworld.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was written around roughly the same time as the *Fasti*, but *Metamorphoses* was completed first, making it Ovid's initial adaptation of the myth (Miller & Newlands 3). Ovid was a Roman poet who wrote many famous poems, and was eventually exiled from Rome by the Emperor Augustus for unexplained reasons. *Metamorphoses* was written before his exile and is composed of fifteen books full of mythological stories. It was published in 8AD (Kennedy, ix-xi). Though this is the next notable surviving myth chronologically, it was written over half a century after *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.

This version of the myth begins with Venus (the Roman / Latin version of Aphrodite) telling her son Cupid to shoot Pluto (who is sometimes referred to as Dis) with an arrow so that he will fall in love with Proserpina. Proserpina, meanwhile, is picking flowers when she is suddenly whipped away by Pluto, newly overcome with his arrow-related love for her. As she is carried off, she cries out for her mother. As she is being held by Pluto her tunic comes loose and all of the flowers she picked fall out in lines 398 to 399 (Ovid. *Met*). The symbolism here is coming on stronger than Zeus comes on to almost any woman, as it is a literal deflowering of Proserpina at the hands of Dis. Deflowering is of course a colloquial term for the loss of virginity. This loss happens in a moment of violence; as she is being taken against her will, she is also being deflowered against her will. This moment is layered and emotional, as are many tales involving sexual violence. The nymph of a nearby lake, Cyane, tries to stop Pluto by calling:

"No farther shall you go! Ceres shall have No son against her will;
Proserpina Should have been asked, not taken.* If I may Compare
small acts with great ones, Anapis loved me,* And I became his
bride, but at least he asked me, He did not force or frighten me into
wedlock." (Ovid. *Met*. 415-420, trans, Humphries)

Pluto does not listen to this plea, instead forcing his way through Cyane's lake to the Underworld. In her grief for Proserpina, Cyane dissolves away. Shortly afterwards Ceres discovers her daughter is missing and begins to search to the ends of the Earth for her. She eventually comes across the nymph Arethusa who tells her:

"I saw Proserpina, with these very eyes I saw her, Minerva and the
Muses Sorrowful, to be sure, and still half-frightened, And still a
queen, the greatest of the world Of darkness, and an empress, the

proud consort Of the proud ruler of the world of darkness" (Ovid. Met. 504-509. trans, Humphries).

Ceres comes before Jove (the Roman/Latin version of Zeus, also known as Jupiter) and asks for Proserpina to be returned to her. Jove insists that it is not a bad marriage arrangement, but does agree to let Proserpina return if she has not tasted food from the Underworld. Proserpina, however, had a moment of absentminded carelessness;

"She had been hungry, wandering in the gardens, Poor simple child, and plucked from the leaning bough A pomegranate, the crimson fruit, and peeled it, With the inside coating of the pale rind showing, And eaten seven of the seed" (Ovid. Met. 535-539. trans, Humphries).

She was seen only by a character named Ascalaphus, who tells Jove he saw her break her fast. Proserpina (Persephone) turns Ascalaphus into an ugly bird in revenge. Jupiter sees the perspective of both his brother, Pluto, and his sister, Ceres, so he splits the year in two and declares Proserpina spend six months with her husband and six with her mother. As for Proserpina:

"the goddess May be with both and neither; and her bearing Minerva and the Muses Is changed, her sorrow alternates with sunlight, The cloud and shadow vanishing (Ovid. Met. 566-569.trans, Humphries).

Rape of Proserpine

Claudian was a Latin poet who lived from approximately 370CE until 404CE (Foley 538). He had a large body of written work when he began the mythological epic the Rape of Proserpine, which he wrote on and off for many years (Foley 540). Claudian begins his potentially unfinished epic poem (more on that unfinished note later), Rape of Proserpine, with a summary of the story he is about to tell:

"Say with what torch the god of love overcame Dis, and tell how Proserpine was stolen away in her maiden pride to win Chaos as a dower; and how through many lands Ceres, sore troubled, pursued her anxious search" (Claud. DRP. 28-30. trans, Platnauer).

The Symbolic Significance of the Pomegranate

A shared element between Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, is the presence of the pomegranate seeds which bond Persephone to the Underworld. The pomegranate, often seen as Hades' tool of trickery and violation within this myth, can also be seen as a

source of choice and agency for Persephone in a story where those qualities are otherwise lacking:

"If she chooses to eat, she demonstrates agency. Some aspect of the maiden consents to the transformation of her identity, her role, her powers, and her life such that she becomes consort and queen of the Underworld... If, on the other hand, Hades forces or tricks her into eating the pomegranate, Kore/Persephone continues to be a victim, and her bond with Hades is characterized by the fresh trauma of deceit and betrayal." (Nelson 9).

When we consider that Persephone may have willingly eaten the pomegranate, it not only has the power to force her to be connected to the Underworld, but also to give her agency.

Even though Persephone expresses sadness and guilt to her mother over having eaten the seeds in The Homeric Hymn to Demeter, she becomes an unreliable narrator (a narrator who can no longer be trusted to tell the story truthfully) in that moment, as she may have lied and potentially felt ashamed if she had a desire for power or to stay married, leading her to consume the fruit (Nelson 10).

When it comes to modern understanding of the myth,

"Whether or not. Persephone chooses to eat the pomegranate seeds is crucial to contemporary readers using the Hymn to help negotiate their own Underworld journeys" (Nelson 10).

In this quote Nelson uses the term "Underworld journeys" to refer to any dark times modern readers may be experiencing, much less literal than in Persephone's case. If Persephone ate the pomegranate on her own, she gains empowerment, something modern feminist readers desperately want her to have. There is also symbolism in the use of the pomegranate as opposed to any other food, explained in detail by B. Lincoln in *The Rape of Persephone: A Greek Scenario of Women's Initiation*:

The seed which is specified, rather than the fruit as a whole. gives rise to ideas of life and rebirth. Further, the red color evokes associations. of mortal wounds, but also menstrual blood, the blood of defloration, and the blood of parturition: blood of life, as well as death; sexual blood; women's blood. pomegranate has always made it a symbol of exuberant female fertility, but there are male associations as well, for the term used of the seed in the Homeric Hymn. can mean "testicle" as well as "seed,". Death, life, male, female, and above all, the irrepressible power of reproduction, are all found in the image of the pomegranate seed (95).

In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Hardy presents the story of the young Tess Durbeyfield, which is a dramatic appropriation of the story of rapture and

quest that is inherent to the myth. Despite not being the first Victorian writer to tackle this task, his perception excels at representing the feeling of lost innocence and youth which are “shackled by brutally unsympathetic male energies” (Radford 92). This means that the tragedy of Tess begins when her ignorant parents force her to request financial support from a local family with a noble surname, d’Urberville, after becoming bankrupt. Her parents firmly believe that Durbeyfield is a corruption of the original surname and that they also should have been part of the noble family in the past. However, not only do the d’Urbervilles disregard the petition for help but, Alec, the heir to the family, rapes Tess who ends up bearing his child. Apart from the resemblance between the novel and the myth, Hardy also divides the novel into phases which reminds of the moon symbolism in Homer’s Hymn to Demeter, the source of the Greek myth (Rowan-Brooks, 2018). In the Hellenic Hymn, the sun and the moon are the first to hear Persephone’s laments when she is kidnapped. In the same way, when Tess is raped by Alec the moon is simply a helpless witness to the girl’s suffering:

"With the setting of the moon the pale light lessened, and Tess became invisible as she fell into reverie upon the leaves where he had left her." (Tess 81)

Despite not having records of Hardy’s reading of the Hymn to Demeter, he certainly had knowledge of it and, contrary to the empiricist movement, established “mythology not only as the only perspective appropriate for the modern world but as the natural point of view at all times, of the human mind.” (Bonaparte 419)

Both in the myth and the novel, the young girl is the victim of an exchange arranged by their parents since Persephone is handed to Hades by Zeus and Tess is sent to her disastrous first encounter with Alec D’Urberville by her mother, Joan. However, Hardy performs a “casuistic revision” of the myth in which the mother, Demeter, does everything possible to recover the “ruptured symbiotic unity with Persephone” (Radford18). According to French philosopher Lucy Irigaray (76), Persephone’s destiny is bound by male power and, thus, she is considered a piece of property that can be exchanged or delivered. In the same way, Demeter, who, as a woman, is considered to be another object, is not important enough to be asked about her daughter’s future. American classical scholar, Helene Foley (74), also argues that the myth showcases the marital conventions in Ancient Greece where young girls had to leave their birthplace and be separated from their families to live with their husbands. Unlike Demeter, Joan Durbeyfield broadly exploits her daughter’s sense of obligation towards her family and, consequently,

pushes her daughter into the patriarchal system represented in the character of Alec. Ultimately, her mother is responsible for removing Tess from her home and transforming her into a commodity (Radford 2002).

According to Radford, His[Hardy] placing of the mythological motif near the start of the novel creates an expectation that Tess, like Ceres the Italo-Roman goddess of agriculture identified with the Greek Demeter, will suffer traumatic loss and grief; and, like Persephone, in her overall aspect of unblemished maidenhood, will endure physical violation at the hands of a sexually predatory stranger (Alec d'Urberville), and make a symbolic visit to the underworld. From an early period of composition then, Hardy was using pointed and pungent allusions to the Demeter-Persephone story so as to craft an intricate network of symbolic correspondences.(205)

Tess as the victim of both Alec d'Urbervilles (Dionysus / Mephistopheles) and Angel Clare (Apollo)

In Tess of the d'Urbervilles, Alec d'Urberville represents a dual god according to his actions and Hardy's portrayal. Alec is the heir to a family of great wealth amassed during the Industrial Revolution. Thanks to their well-off status, the family can purchase the ancient noble name of the d'Urbervilles whereas the true heirs live a miserable life (Bonaparte 423). On the one hand, his actions toward Tess during her first visit define him as Hades and foreshadow her abduction and undoing. For example, he forces Tess to eat the pomegranate in the form of a strawberry in their very first meeting which represents "a pre-sexual rite emphasizing Tess's nubility and Alec's lustful intentions" (McGuire 24). As in the original story, Tess does not desire to be fed the strawberry by Alec and "would rather take it in" her "own hand." (Tess 47). Nevertheless, he insists until he parts her lips to take it in, and

"when she could consume no more of the strawberries he filled her little basket with them" in addition to adorning her hat with roses which echoes Persephone's abduction while collecting flowers". (Tess 47)

The strawberries which Alec feeds Tess belong to 'The British Queen' kind which anticipates Tess's "return near the end of the novel as Alec's Queen" (Radford 206). On the other hand, Alec can also be perceived as a Dionysian figure due to his subversion of conventional moral and ethical rules. Dionysus was the Greek god of wine and often challenged social standards in addition to seducing women. In the novel, Hardy collects all these features in the opening of the tenth chapter and attributes them to Alec (Bullen 2019). Hardy depicts the village of the

d'Urbervilles, Trantridge, where they live in a manor house called 'The Slopes'. The narrator affirms that:

every village has its idiosyncrasy, its constitution, often its code of morality", and, therefore, "Trantridge was marked, and was perhaps symptomatic of the choice spirit who ruled The Slopes in that vicinity. (Tess 70)

Nevertheless, it is in The Chase scene where the mythological personalities of Alec combine since it is the moment when he rapes Tess and "begins the first phase of a hunt which persists to the last scene of the novel." (Bullen 9). 'The Chase' is the name of "one of the few remaining woodlands in England of undoubted primeval date" where there was still "Druidical mistletoe on aged oaks" (Tess 44). Hardy stresses the "sylvan antiquity" of the area and, thus, describes a mythical landscape where Tess's virginity is going to be sacrificed. The course of events in this scene is characterized by conflicting forces, Dionysianism and Apollonianism which represent the duality of chaos and order. The former is responsible for the rawness and brutality of the sexual act whereas the second one softens the situation through the "natural, woodland setting" (Bullen 10). According to Parker (276) the Chase scene stresses the eternality of the tensions between female and male forces since it dramatizes "the eternal pattern of the female fleeing from the male" although the woman always ends up "being caught". As well as to Hades and Persephone, Tess and Alec seem involved in an eternal battle which ultimately reflects Hardy's "pessimistic rendering" of the myth (Radford 207).

Hardy is truly interested in the myth's tragic consequences, which serve as a canvas for him to criticize the nineteenth-century crisis of faith and rationalism. The character who represents the modern and intellectual man is Angel Clare, Tess's true love interest (Radford 2002). Angel has often been portrayed as the hero of the narrative, but he rather is a "satiric portrait" of the rational man (Bonaparte 425). Angel is not able to transcend himself and reach the mythical truth which leads to him abandoning Tess when he discovers her sexual encounter with Alec. In the end, both Alec and Angel form a "malevolent symbiosis" with Tess as the "sacrificial victim" since Alec abuses her sexually, but it is Angel who ultimately rejects her forcing her to return to Alec (Kozicki 158). When Angel returns to her, he is also the one who unwillingly leads her to murder Alec because he recognizes him as her "husband in Nature" (Tess 262). Finally, this leads to another ritual similar to the one in The Chase scene in which Angel and Tess, after Alec's murder, escape to Stonehenge where the main character is finally arrested by the police which symbolizes her death (Radford 2002).

To conclude, the transformation of Tess into Persephone reflects the tragic nature of her story and the impact of external forces on her life. It adds a layer of symbolism and depth to the novel, allowing for a more nuanced exploration of the themes and challenges faced by Tess in the patriarchal society of the 19th century. In this process, Tess has been compared to two goddesses at the same time, first as a suffering Persephone, the queen of the Underworld, second as Demeter, the goddess of agriculture and the loving mother of Persephone.

Process III: Transformation of Tess into Artemis (the Virgin Goddess)

In this stage of transformation, Hardy skillfully introduces his fascinating character, Tess, as Artemis, the chaste goddess, highlighting their shared destiny. Artemis, "the lady of the wild things" (Grant140), "the beautiful virgin huntress of the mountains" (Grant141), is associated with hunting, particularly her fondness for stags. However, Artemis is a complex figure, much like other mythical beings. She is both a protector of young children and vulnerable animals, yet she also takes pleasure in the pursuit of stags (Graves 82). Nevertheless, there are subtle connections between the myth of Artemis and the novel, with some variations and deviations.

The theme of hunting plays a central role in Tess's tragic story. Tess is pursued by fate, represented by Alec and society's laws. The locations throughout the novel, from her birthplace to her eventual demise, are depicted as ancient hunting grounds. The inn at Marlott, known as the "White Hart's Inn," alludes to a previous hunting incident involving a white hart that was spared by the king but killed by his companions (Tess 33). This foreshadows Tess's own fate as she is chased down and destroyed like a delicate stag by the hounds of society and the law. The forest where Tess's downfall occurs is called "The Chase," further emphasizing the hunting motif. It is here that she is pursued and violated by Alec, symbolized by the overt sexual metaphor of being pierced. During her escape with Angel, they venture into the New Forest, an ancient hunting forest (Tess 434), which happens to be "an ancient hunting forest" (Trivedi 493). Like Artemis, who both protects and kills, Tess is portrayed as a caretaker of birds at Trantridge but also becomes a killer of birds in a poignant scene.

Furthermore, the scene that stands out more than any in its symbolical meaning comes towards the end of the novel's fifth phase. Yet again it involves birds, the most frequently recurring of all creatures great and small. At a very low point in Tess's young life, she wanders the countryside looking for work, with "something of the wild animal in the

unreflecting instinct with which she rambled on" (Tess 216). She is compelled to sleep in the bushes, where she finds a spot of dry leaves under the shelter of some holly bushes. She makes "a sort of nest" (Tess 217) out of the dead leaves and curls up in it, reiterating the image of her as a wild animal. Nature seems very tender to her in this scene, presenting her with a comfortable place to lie down in. (Kundu 92)

Again, while falling asleep, she hears unfamiliar sounds rustling through the leaves, initially attributing them to the wind. However, when she emerges from under the bushes in the morning, she discovers a collection of dead and dying pheasants on the ground. She reflects on the brutality of the pheasant-hunting shooting party, whom she had previously perceived as "bloodthirsty," "rough," and "brutal" when glimpsing them as a child, as if she saw them through the eyes of a pheasant. "with the impulse of a soul who could feel for kindred sufferers as much as for herself " (Tess 219), she ends the suffering of the wounded birds, symbolically intertwining herself with their fate. The deeply metaphorical nature of the situation renders her act of euthanasia unquestionably innocent. According to Ahrman, in Tess's situation, the birds and herself become entwined, both in their physical suffering and mental anguish. She grants the birds the peace and mercy that she feels incapable of granting herself. Throughout the novel, there is no other setting that mirrors and captures the state of her mind and the phase of her life as powerfully and emotionally as the countryside in which she resides (120).

It is indeed not a mere coincidence that Tess is frequently depicted wearing white attire during significant moments, such as the Maypole dance, her journey to Trantridge, her wedding day, and her final journey to Stonehenge. She is first introduced in the novel as a "white shape," and this recurring image of her "white shape" aligns with Tess's inner purity, described as being as pure as snow and as delicate as gossamer (Tess 102). This imagery also parallels the depiction of Artemis, who is often portrayed wearing white garments. However, Tess is not a deity but a vulnerable mortal, so her white dress becomes stained with the red of blood. Her early encounter with blood while attempting to staunch Prince's wounded chest foreshadows future events. "In her despair, Tess sprang forward and put her hand upon the hole, with the result that she became splashed from face to skirt with the crimson drops" (Tess 55). From then on, she is repeatedly associated with bloodstains at significant milestones in her life, symbolizing the violation of her virginal purity by the crude forces of lust.

It is important to note that Artemis, with whom Tess is associated, is commonly known as a "virgin goddess" (Rose 112). Ironically, Tess bears

the outward appearance and demeanor of virginity despite her brief experience as a mother. This aspect of her appearance initially captivates Angel, who describes her as a "fresh and virginal daughter of Nature" (Tess 152). It is precisely this purity that attracts him to her so strongly. Even after Tess's heartbreaking confession, Angel struggles to believe it, as her face still bears the unmistakable seal of maidenhood: "Nature, in her deceptive ways, had marked Tess's countenance with such an impression of virginity that he gazed at her with a stunned expression" (Tess 274).

To conclude, the myth of Artemis's ruthless killing of Actaeon, who "came upon her bathing naked" (Grant 141), that is who stumbled upon her while she was bathing nude, has long captivated artists, including Titian in his famous painting of the scene. It is possible that this anecdote influenced Tess's own act of murder, which may seem perplexing given her inherently gentle nature. Alec violated Tess in her vulnerable and defenseless state, akin to being naked. Ultimately, she takes Alec's life with the fervor of a divine being seeking retribution. This parallel suggests that Tess's actions are not solely driven by her personal circumstances but may also be influenced by larger mythical and artistic motifs.

Process IV: Transformation of Tess into Iphigenia (the Sacrificed goddess for the sake of her family)

In this process, the configuration of Tess's character also bears resemblance to another associated myth, that of Iphigenia. In this myth, Iphigenia, despite her innocence, is sacrificed by her family to appease Artemis, whom her father had offended. She is lured away from home under the pretense of being married to Achilles, as orchestrated by her mother, Clytemnestra (Rose 119). Similarly, Tess's foolish mother, Joan, dresses her up carefully and sends her off to Trantridge with the hopeful expectation that she will be desired and married by her wealthy relative. Tess is essentially offered as a sacrificial victim for the sake of her parents' family's survival. Despite her misgivings, Tess is compelled to go to Trantridge and stay there because, like Iphigenia, her sacrifice has already been predetermined due to the considerations of her parental family. Tess is twice sacrificed for her parental family – first as an innocent teenage virgin daughter, akin to Iphigenia, and then, like Electra, consciously embracing her own downfall for the sake of her family.

In the final moments of Tess's story, the motif of mythic sacrifice is powerfully emphasized. After a long and arduous journey through the

dark night, Tess and Angel find themselves within the ruins of Stonehenge. Exhausted, Tess falls asleep briefly on the ancient Stone of Sacrifice (Tess 433) just before the police arrive to capture her. Angel pleads with them, asking them to allow her to finish her sleep. Although they approach with a clear purpose, upon seeing where Tess lies, they show no objection and stand silently, much like the pillars surrounding them (Tess 443).

At this solemn hour, the reenactment of an ancient sacrificial rite unfolds. A "virginal" girl is being offered as a sacrifice to the Sun God, while the priests and commoners stand in a mix of awe and ruthless reverence. In this perspective, Tess's tragedy, much like that of Iphigenia, encompasses the incomprehensible mysteries of life and its often cruel ways, all of which unfold upon an innocent girl. (Kundu 94)

Frye mentions the stories of Andromeda and Iphigenia as "the two best-known myths of female sacrifice" (Frye 35). However, Andromeda, the beautiful innocent daughter of king Cepheus, offered to a sea-monster in order to expiate for her mother's offence (Grant 395), had been rescued in the nick of the time by Perseus whereas Tess is less fortunate and finds no saviour in her hour of crisis.

Hence, Tess places herself in the role of sacrifice at different times throughout the novel to provide for or protect her family. As a sacrificial figure, Tess seems to echo characters such as Persephone, and Iphigenia, the eldest daughter of Agamemnon. There are several points throughout the novel, where Tess acts as a sacrifice. Moreover, sacrificial figures often serve a higher purpose greater than themselves. In Euripides' Iphigenia at Aulis, Iphigenia appears at Aulis under the pretense of marriage to Achilles, which turns out to be a lie. After Iphigenia and her mother's arrival at Aulis, the truth is revealed: Iphigenia is to be sacrificed to Artemis to ensure the victory of the Greeks. At first, Iphigenia is shocked and fearful; however, she ultimately decides to appease Artemis with her sacrifice, to ensure the success of the Greek army: "For I am departing to give the Greeks salvation and victory" (Euripides 329). Iphigenia's sacrifice is more significant than herself and rather than merely thinking of herself and her family, she thinks of her community and wants to ensure its victory and survival. (Bonaparte 428)

The same in the case of Tess. It is worth mentioning that Tess's role as a virginal sacrifice is evident in her relationship with Alec. She is coerced into fulfilling her family's needs by engaging in a sexual relationship with him, which ultimately leads to the loss of her innocence. This repetition of the sacrificial role echoes the story of Iphigenia, who is also depicted as an unmarried and virginal girl. Tess's second sacrifice to Alec occurs

after the death of her father and her abandonment by Angel. In order to provide for her remaining family and secure their survival, she once again submits herself to Alec's advances. This act of sacrifice highlights Tess's unwavering commitment to her family's well-being, even at the cost of her own happiness and dignity.

To sum up, the similarity between Tess and Iphigenia lies in the fact that both of them have accepted the role of sacrifice for the benefits of their families. Their sacrifice is more significant than themselves and rather than merely thinking of themselves. Yet there is a slight difference between the two. While Tess sacrifices herself for her family, Iphigenia's sacrifice is more significant than herself and rather than merely thinking of herself and her family, she thinks of her community and wants to ensure its victory and survival.

Process V: Transformation of Tess into Demeter

In Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* a relationship exists between the symbolical sacrifice of Tess at Stonehenge and her association with fertility, ritual, and mythic cycles of seasonal death and rebirth. In his MA thesis entitled "The Use of Mythology in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" McGuire pointed out:

Because Hardy associates Tess with fertility, reproductive power, and seasonal change, she personifies nature and closely resembles the earth mother goddess Demeter. Ritual is evident in her participation in the May-Day club revel, in her intended suicide under the mistletoe, and in her manner of killing Alec d'Urberville. Myth cycle culminates with a fertility ritual in the powerful sacrificial incident at Stonehenge, for, although Tess physically dies at Wintonchester, she symbolically dies at Stonehenge. By being reborn in 'Liza-Lu, Tess thus completes the mythic pattern of seasonal changes.(4)

Tess plays a dual role in fulfilling the Demeter motif in Hardy's novel. Like Demeter, Tess is both maiden and mother, the two mythical poles of the Great Mother. This double role corresponds to Demeter's protean character in the myth: Demeter and Persephone seem to be two separate entities but are really different manifestations of a single divinity. Because of this duality, the Demeter-Persephone myth dramatizes the phenomenon of death and rebirth of vegetation in the seasonal cycles of organic nature. To Demeter are appropriated the crops of the old year, while the rebirth of fertility and crops of the new year are attributed to Persephone.

Thus, as maiden Tess is Persephone because her love for Clare harmonizes with the lush growth of the summer months; and as mother

Tess is Demeter waiting in the winter for the return of the fertility of Clare's love. This, then, is the general relation between Tess and the Demeter myth.

Tess, the rural girl, is also associated with a cluster of Earth deities: Demeter, Cybele, Ceres. Angel, during his courtship at Talbothays, calls her Demeter, Artemis. In the early hours of dawn Tess's face seemed to be gleaming in the cold light from the north-east. "It was then... that she impressed him most deeply. She was no longer the milkmaid, but a visionary essence of woman – a whole sex condensed into one typical form. He called her Artemis, Demeter, and other fanciful names half teasingly" (Tess 162) Although Tess feels disturbed at this, and implores, 'Call me Tess!', the associations have been unmistakably put across. Tess, like Demeter, is all along associated with activities close to nature – harvesting, milking, threshing, making field-fire, etc. Tess has been projected as the Ceres figure in "a local Cerealia" (Tess 33) as Hardy describes the Club-walking scene at Marlott. Ceres, "an Italian corn-goddess was identified with the Greek goddess Demeter" (Guirand 218)

Process VI: Transformation of Tess into Eurydice goddess

The echoes of the Orpheus-Eurydice myth can be found within the plot and sequences of Tess's story, hinting at a transformation of Tess into a goddess-like figure, similar to Eurydice. The doomed and unconsummated marriage between Tess and Angel parallels the ill-fated marriage of the mythic pair, where Hymen's torch brought tears instead of joy. The omens that accompany Tess's marriage, such as the vision of the ancestral coach and the crowing of the cock, closely mirror the ill omens in the Eurydice myth.

In the myth, Eurydice's beauty made her the object of desire for another even after her marriage. Similarly, Tess had been desired prior to her marriage and again after it, solely due to her physical beauty. Eurydice's desperate attempts to avoid unwanted advances led her to inadvertently step on a snake and get bitten on the foot (Bulfinch 230). Metaphorically, Tess also falls victim to a metaphorical snake, as she is caught unaware in a situation where danger lurks, symbolized by the serpent hissing where the birds sing (Tess 104).

These parallels between Tess and Eurydice suggest a transformation of Tess into a figure akin to the goddess-like Eurydice, as she navigates through a tragic journey influenced by mythic motifs and encounters the perils of desire and temptation. Hence, the parallel between Orpheus and Angel is striking in their respective attempts to retrieve their lost loved

ones. Orpheus is given the condition that he must not “turn round to look at her” (Bulfinch 231)

However, like Orpheus, Angel's victory in winning Tess back is short-lived. Just as Orpheus loses Eurydice to the realm of death, Angel loses Tess forever, not to a mortal being but to the inexorable grip of perpetual death. Tess bids him farewell, reminiscent of Eurydice bidding farewell to Orpheus. They journey through darkness together, and on the brink of dawn, Tess is snatched away once again, this time forever. “Just as he (Orpheus) could see the glimmer of a sunbeam reflected on the rocks, he felt at once as if Eurydice were not there (and) turned his head” (Hyde 118). That is the moment when Orpheus turns his head, sensing the absence of Eurydice just as he sees the glimmer of a sunbeam on the rocks, finds a parallel in Tess's capture just before daybreak, with the silver paleness of the horizon. (Tess, 442).

To conclude, both Tess and Eurydice bid their final farewells to their husbands in the twilight, at the end of a dark tunnel and a metaphorical ‘dark cave’ (Tess 439) respectively. The ending of the novel, along with Tess's marriage and her ultimate fate, can be viewed through the lens of the Orpheus-Eurydice myth. This imaginative layering lends a sense of timeless sadness to the plight of mortal love, threatened and doomed by separation, loss, and death.

Process VII: Transformation of Tess into Penelope goddess (the Faithful Wife)

In the later stages of the story, Tess assumes the role of Penelope, the faithful wife who waits for her husband's return against all odds. Like Penelope, Tess holds onto hope and patiently waits for Angel to come back to her, even in the face of challenges and the persistent pursuit of a formidable suitor, Alec. In a sense, Alec can be seen as Tess's version of Antinous, Penelope's ardent lover during Odysseus's absence in the Odyssey. Alec shares similar traits with Antinous, being described as the “meanest” and “most shameless” of all suitors (Graves 732).

On the other hand, Angel embodies the character of Odysseus. He travels across seas and faces trials in the outer world, only to return to his wife, Tess, who has faithfully waited for him. Metaphorically, Angel comes back to Tess as a beggar, seeking forgiveness from his wronged wife. This parallel between Tess and Penelope adds another layer to Tess's transformation, as she embodies the virtues of loyalty, endurance, and unwavering love, just like the legendary figure of Penelope. (Kundu 97)

Thus, it is worth mentioning that Tess's role as a Penelope figure is ultimately a failed one. Unlike Penelope, Tess does not have the luxury of indulging in the symbolic act of weaving and un-weaving a never-ending tapestry, as her life is filled with hardships and demands that leave her with little time for such pursuits. In this sense, Tess's experience differs significantly from that of Penelope. Furthermore, Angel's homecoming does not align with Odysseus's eventual happy restoration to his home and hearth. Instead, Angel returns as a broken man, having traveled to unfamiliar lands and endured various trials. To his disappointment, he finds that there is no Ithaca-like haven for him to settle into. This contrast further underscores the tragic nature of Tess's story, as her hopes for a happy reunion with Angel are dashed by the harsh realities of their circumstances.

Conclusion

This paper examined Thomas Hardy's use of classical myths in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Through allusions to myths surrounding figures like Persephone and Artemis, Hardy imbued Tess with symbolic dimensions connecting her story to universal themes. Hardy portrayed Tess undergoing seven transformative processes that symbolically changed her from an ordinary woman to a mythic figure. This included portrayals mirroring Persephone's abduction and Iphigenia's sacrifice. Analysis of mythical references revealed Hardy's aim to address Victorian crises through myth.

By drawing parallels between Tess and tragic mythical figures, Hardy invited consideration of her experiences' timelessness. Overall, Hardy's adaptation of myths enriched the novel's symbolism and interpretations of Tess as fulfilling an archetypal role. Qualitative textual analysis identified mythical parallels and contextualized referenced myths. Comparisons illuminated Hardy's appropriations' significance. Hardy's defamiliarized mythical usage addressed life's mysteries, demonstrating his skill in reconstructing reality conceptually through myth.

After the detail discussion and analysis of the seven processes of transformation that Tess underwent to become a myth, the researcher came up with the following findings:

1. The use of myths in nineteenth-century literature indeed served a purpose beyond mere ornamentation. It played a significant role in addressing the crises of faith and the challenges posed by empiricism during that time.
2. The seven processes of transformation which are responsible for transforming Tess from an ordinary woman, or a fallen woman, as

- has been called by some critics, into a myth. These processes of transformation clearly show how genius and skillful Thomas Hardy is in his treatment of his main character Tess.
3. This transformation of Tess into the Greek myths like - Persephone, Artemis, Europa, Demeter, Niobe, Daphne, Iphigenia, Eurydice, Penelope, Cybele, Ceres, Lotis, Eve, as well as Pluto, Priapus - reflects the tragic nature of her story and the impact of external forces on her life. It adds a layer of symbolism and depth to the novel, allowing for a more nuanced exploration of the themes and challenges faced by Tess in the patriarchal society of the 19th century.
 4. The thematic structure of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is interwoven with the ancient Greek and Latin mythology in a very artistic manner.
 5. Through these transformation processes Tess herself can be seen as embodying multiple mythological figures and themes. She is associated with goddesses like Artemis and Persephone, symbolizing her connection to nature and her journey through darkness and transformation. Tess's experiences of victimization and sacrifice also echo the stories of Iphigenia and Eurydice, highlighting the tragic fate that befalls her.
 6. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is a novel that is rich in mythological allusions and symbolism. Thomas Hardy skillfully weaves together various ancient myths and archetypal figures, creating a complex tapestry of meaning within the story.
 7. Hardy is truly interested in the myth's tragic consequences, which serve as a canvas for him to criticize the nineteenth-century crisis of faith and rationalism.
 8. The presence of these mythological allusions adds depth and complexity to the novel, allowing for multiple interpretations and layers of meaning. They help to highlight the timeless themes of fate, destiny, and the human condition that are central to the story.
 9. By drawing on these ancient myths and archetypes, Hardy not only enriches the narrative but also invites readers to consider the universal and timeless aspects of Tess's story, connecting her experiences to broader themes and human experiences throughout history.

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