A Study in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* as A Call for Liberal Education for Women

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دراسة في تيس سليلة دوفرفيل كدعوة للتعليم الليبرالي للمراة

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Introduction

Amongst the literary writers who used their art to direct the attention towards the issue of woman and her rights in a proper life is the English poet and novelist Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), who has been praised for his "openness to the feminine principle" **1** as Irving Howe put it. Hardy's wide readings have changed his way of dealing with and thinking about so many critical issues which started to float on the surface of the English society during the mid and late of the 19th century. His readings for a number of writers, who seem of huge impact on his writings as he later admits that – "[his] pages show harmony of view with Charles Darwin, T. H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, David Hume, John Stuart Mill and others ..." **2**, have opened his mind towards certain problems that were prevailing at that time.

More importantly Hardy brought up under an affectionate and educated mother, Jemima Hand Hardy (1814-1904) who seemed lucky enough to bear a sort of education the matter that has helped Hardy and illuminated him about the importance of education for women. In his article "Thomas Hardy. A Biographical Sketch" Dr. Andrzej Diniejko (Senior Lecturer in English Literature and Culture, Warsaw University, Poland) sheds light on Jemima's role in the life of her son. He states that Jemima,

> was a former maidservant and cook. She came from a poor family**,** but she had acquired from her mother a love of reading, and her literary tastes included Latin poets and French romances in English translation. She provided for her son's education. First she taught little Thomas to read and write before he was four, and then she instilled in him a growing interest in literature. **3**

Thus, Hardy grew and brought up with a beautiful and respectful image in his mind about the educated woman in times when women were deprived of most of their rights, one of these is education.

In her article "Women's Status in Mid 19th-Century England - A Brief Overview" Helena Wojtczak has pointed to a large extent to the degrading state from which most women suffer.

According to her, women who witnessed the 19th century had no choices which women of the 21st have. **4** She argues that most of those women,

> lived in a state little better than slavery. They had to obey men, because in most cases men held all the resources and women had no independent means of subsistence. A wealthy widow or spinster was a lucky exception. A woman who remained single would attract social disapproval and pity. She could not have children or cohabit with a man: the social penalties were simply too high. Nor could she follow a profession, since they were all closed to women. **5**

Then Wojtczak turned to register the educational status. She states that "Girls received less education than boys, were barred from universities, and could obtain only low-paid jobs. Women's sole purpose was to marry and reproduce." **6** Philippa Howden Chapman and Ichiro Kawachi state that "[f]or poor women without education, who then fell on hard times," **7** Prostitutes "was one of the few options" **8** which was "hard, dangerous work with a short life expectancy." **9** Thus, education thought to be "the wall keeping women from obtaining equal status in society during the nineteenth century," **10** for through it they would be "able to escape these social limitations … .When educated, they gained a sense of confidence and the power to change history."**11** Thereby,"[t]he struggle for women's education has been a rising conflict." **12**

However, the prevailing feminist atmosphere and the publication of "Subjection of Women" (1869) by the British philosopher and political economist John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), where Mill discussed "three major facets of women's lives that he felt are hindering them: society and gender construction, education, and marriage," **13** has directed the attention of the elite towards the problems that women face in their societies just for a guilt of being women. A guilt which put them at the backward of the societies and subjected them to the law of double standard by which women were treated everywhere and every time. One of those is Thomas Hardy whose "disposition to a melancholy view was confirmed and increased by the age in which he lived … for it was an age of transition … [a]long with the disintegration of the old social and economic structure went a disintegration of ideas." **14** Furthermore, his thorough reading of Mill's *On Liberty*, where Mill devotes a considerable space to discuss women's freedom and compulsory education, has influenced his liberal thought and as F. B. Pinion observes "undoubtedly encouraged him to think independently" **15** Thereby, his novels, together with that of his contemporaries, "stand as graphic reminders of the impacts of poverty and motivators of reform, and suggest pathways towards reform that helped to mobilise social and political action." **16**

In *Tess of the D' Urbervilles* (1891), which is considered as Hardy's best novel, and which has been often analyzed in terms of the "[s]ocial prejudice and male dominance in Victorian Patriarchal Society" **17**; Hardy's pessimism; Hardy's concept of purity … etc., Hardy has, in a way or other, pointed to an eternal problem in most women's lives, namely education, or more precisely liberal education which was "advocated in the 19th century by thinkers such as John Henry Newman and F. D. Maurice." **18** According to the free encyclopedia, from Wikipedia, liberal education "is a system or course of education suitable for the cultivation of a free human being. It is based on the medieval concept of the liberal arts or, more commonly now, the

liberalism of the Age of Enlightenment." **19** In the perspective of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, liberal education is defined as "a philosophy of education that empowers individuals with broad knowledge and transferable skills, and a stronger sense of values, ethics, and civic engagement ... characterized by challenging encounters with important issues, and more a way of studying than a specific course or field of study." **20** As for T. H. Huxley "liberal education is an artificial education which has not only prepared a man to escape the great evils of disobedience to natural laws, but has trained him to appreciate and to seize upon the rewards which Nature scatters with as free a hand as her penalties." **21** From here, Hardy seems to set out to build one of his novel themes seeing in liberal education a solid base from which women can start to solve their problems and through which they can establish their own future.

In a preface to the novel Hardy admits that "the story is sent out in all sincerity of purpose, as an attempt to give artistic form to a true sequence of things." **22** According to Lionel Johnson "[i]n art, nothing is more difficult than to turn theories of ethics, or of metaphysics, into living motives: than the expression of them through the treatment of human characters and of human actions." **23** In this novel Tess Durbeyfield was Hardy's living motive along which Hardy takes his readers to accompany his female protagonist on a journey to the realm of life where man's capacities are tested, and where all the accumulation of learning (academic, religious, … etc.) are put into practice. The novel tells the story of Tess Durbeyfield, a poor villager girl with simple "Sixth Standard" **24** education who, forced by the poverty of her family; a sense of guilt after the death of Prince (the horse) which was their source of living; and by the pressure of her mother, agree to go out on a journey to The Slopes to claim kinship with the wealthy d'Urbervilles, and at the same time to "ask for some help in [their] trouble." (p. 40) as her mother told her.

Right from the beginning Hardy focuses on the simplicity and naivety of the Derbeyfields who, upon the discovery that their family could be a branch of the d'Urbervilles, an ancient wealthy family, decides to send their 16-year-old daughter alone with her limited knowledge to the unknown, as the only concern of Mrs. Joan Durbeyfield (Tess' mother), a woman who believes in superstitions, and still consults and tries the fate of her children in the "Compleat Fortune-Teller", which is – "an old thick volume," (p. 24), is that "Tess would; and likely enough 'twould lead to some noble gentleman marrying her." (p. 30) A topic that is numerously tackled in the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by novelists such as Jane Austen (*Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*); George Gissing (*The Odd Woman*); and others.

Mrs. Derbeyfield does not care what will happen to her daughter there, or about the human monsters that Tess may meet through her trip, especially she was a beautiful girl and as Hardy describes her "a mere vessel of emotion untinctured by experience." (p. 14) She is simply "handed over by her mother to the life and mercies of the ruling class," **25** to use Arnold Kettle's expression. The mother does not recognize the kind of education that her daughter needs at this stage of her life, for the parents play an important role in a child's education as nothing helps a child succeeds like an enlighten parent who paves the way for his or her children with an elementary education and some useful instructions to face any kind of challenges that may meet them. Thus, unarmed and insecure, Tess began her first journey setting her first step towards the life of experience as any girl in her situation that is left without many choices.

When Tess reaches Trantridge she meets Alec d'Uberville the son of Mrs. Stoke-d'Urberville, an elderly blind woman and the owner of the country house and of a little farm. Tess's simple education does not aid her much to extrapolate Alec's diabolic looks towards her or his cunning movements when he "held [strawberries] by the stem to her mouth." (p. 48) Though reluctantly, she subjected to him and "parted her lips and took it in." (p. 48) She becomes merely a tool and her sight seems not much better from that of his blind mother when they "passed round to the rose trees, whence he gathered blossoms and gave her to put in her bosom. She obeyed like one in a dream, and when she could affix no more he himself tucked a bud or two into her hat, and heaped her basket with others in the prodigality of his bounty." (p. 48) She doesn't show any reservations about her life and "gave particulars" (p. 49) of whatever Alec asks her about. When the time of her departure approach he offers her some food into a tent meanwhile he watches her beauty "through the skeins of smoke that pervaded the tent." (p. 48) But Tess, as the narrator points out "did not divine, as she innocently looked down at the roses in her bosom, that there behind the blue narcotic haze was potentially the 'tragic mischief' of her drama – one who stood fair to be the blood-red ray in the spectrum of her young life." (p. 48)

Tess's naivety makes her appear as "a funny thing" and "a crumby girl!" (p. 50) as Alec called her after her departure. Nevertheless, after the letter of invitation (by Alec d'Urberville which he writes in the name of his mother), Tess, under pressure of her mother, goes back to Trantridge to look after a little fowl-farm, the matter that is interpreted by the naïve Joan Derbeyfield as only "[Mrs. d'Urberville's] artful way of getting [Tess] there without raising [her] hopes" (p. 52), and that "[s]he's going to own [her] as kin." (p. 52) When it's time for the second journey, Mrs. Derbeyfield advises Tess "to put [her] best side outward," (p. 57) and she works her best to make Tess appears as a beautiful doll in Alec's eyes as the basis and the end of all mothers who try to make their daughters look as attractive to men:

> she fetched a great basin, and washed Tess's hair with such thoroughness that when dried and brushed it looked twice as much as at other times. She tied it with a broader pink ribbon than usual. Then she put upon her the white frock …, the airy fullness of which, supplementing her enlarged *coiffure*, imparted to her developing figure an amplitude which belied her age, and might cause her to be estimated as a woman when she was not much more than a child. (pp. 57-58)

Even in her second visit to Trantridge when she meets Mrs. d'Urberville for the first time, Tess, as Hardy illustrates "was far from being aware that the old lady had never heard a word of the so-called kinship. She gathered that no great affection flowed between the blind woman and her son. But in that, too, she was mistaken." (p. 72) She does not guess Alec's mockery when he addresses her by the word "Cousin", which "[had a faint ring of mockery]," (p. 73), as Hardy puts it. And despite the passage of three months Tess still lives in total ignorance until the catastrophe happened, as the darkness that envelopes her mind about the outside world and its people has collaborated with the darkness and the fog that envelop the wood at the Chase (where Alec seduces and rapes her) to bring her downfall and cause her to be maiden no more as Hardy names the second phase of his novel. Only when Tess starts to sense an air of danger approaches

her, as she "[has] learnt that the serpent hisses where the sweet birds sing, and her views of life had been totally changed for her by the lesson," (p. 98) Tess decides to flee from Trantridge and goes back to her home. When Alec discovers her on the road he continues his maneuvers and addresses her with the eternal view of woman as a beautiful statue which is empty of mind. He conducts her to make of her beauty her first and chief concern by holding "[her] own beauty against any woman", (p. 101) and advises her to "show it to the world more than [she does] before it fades." (p. 101) On her way home, Tess randomly passing by a painter who is busy painting religious passages onto blank walls and gates throughout the countryside which all concentrate on women's chastity, and which were part of the religious education directed to women in particular at that time. The ordeal experienced by Tess made her aware of her need of another type of education. At home when Mrs. Derbeyfield reproaches her daughter that she "ought to have been more careful if [she] didn't mean to get him to make [her] his wife!," (p. 106) Tess cried making her first radical call for another type of education – a more liberal education which enables her to cope with the outside world. In her answer to her mother Tess puts her hand on the main reason which causes her dilemma. She exclaims:

> How could I be expected to know? I was a child when I left this house four months ago. Why didn't you tell me there was danger in men-folk? Why didn't you warn me? Ladies know what to fend hands against, because they read novels that tell them of these tricks; but I never had the chance o' learning in that way, and you did not help me! . (p. 106).

At home Tess does not find a solace but darkness. Her state of ignorance parallels her mental state which suites her preference of darkness at this period. She secludes herself from the outer world. Her only exercise "was after dark…when the light and the darkness are so evenly balanced that the constraint of day and the suspense of night neutralize each other, leaving absolute mental liberty." (pp. 109-110)

At last, after she lost her child, the result of the night at the Chase, Tess resolves to work as a dairymaid on a farm at Talbothays Dairy. Her lack of suitable education leads her to her second stage of struggle through her life as the economic situation of the family leads her to the trap of child labor, as she never gets the opportunity to elevate herself to anything else. Nevertheless "she had learned what to do". (p. 126) as Hardy puts it. His reference to Roger Ascham's words "[b]y experience …we find out a short way by a long wandering," (p. 126) seems to refer to Tess as she begins to sense the world around her. He acknowledges:

> [a]lmost at a leap Tess thus changed from simple girl to complex woman. Symbols of reflectiveness passed into her face, and a note of tragedy at times into her voice. Her eyes grew larger and more eloquent. She became what would have been called a fine creature; her aspect was fair and arresting; her soul that of a woman whom the turbulent experience of the last year or two had quite failed to demoralize. But for the world's opinion those experiences would have been simply a liberal education. (p. 127)

Nevertheless, Tess remains like those persons "of limited spheres" (p. 128) still in need for more elaboration. At Talbothays Hardy transfers Tess to another scene where he crystallizes his theme of calling for liberal education for women. There she meets Angel Clare, a clergyman's son and the youngest of three brothers who though did not enter the college as his parents planned, Angel holds more liberal ideas. When he returns home and through a conversation between him and his father about taking Orders in the Church, Angel expresses his opinion concerning the old ways of a religious institution in the perception of things. He argues,

> I love the Church as one loves a parent. I shall always have the warmest affection for her. There is no institution for whose history I have a deeper admiration; but I cannot honestly be ordained her minister, as my brothers are, while she refuses to liberate her mind from an untenable redemptive theolatry. (p. 151)

When his father argues about what is the good of education "if it is not to be used for the honour of and glory of God?" (p. 152), Angel exclaims "[w]hy, that is may be used for the honour and glory of man, …" (p. 152) Here Angel feels that the virtue of education should be directed first and foremost towards the elevation of man.

The theme of liberal education is repeatedly returned to in the third phase of the novel. In Chapter XIX, Hardy further demonstrates his theme when his heroine starts to realize the difference between her educational level and that of the new comer. He states that:

> [she] seemed to regard Angel Clare as an intelligence rather than a man. As such she compared him with herself; and at every discovery of the abundance of his illuminations, of the distance between her own modest mental standpoint and the unmeasurable, Andean altitude of his, she became quite dejected, disheartened from all further effort on her own part whatever. (p. 163)

When asked about the reason for her dejection, Tess renders her feeling of being nobody. She complains to Angel,

> Just a sense of what might have been with me! My life looks as if it had been wasted for want of chances! When I see what you know, what you have read, and seen, and thought, I feel what a nothing I am! I'm like the poor Queen of Sheba who lived in the Bible. There is no more spirit in me. (pp. 163-164)

When he offers to help in "any line of reading [she] would like to take up", (p. 164) she replies that she doesn't want to "know anything more about it than [she knows] already" (p. 164). And when he tries to know why, she observes that, "what's the use of learning that [she is] one of a long row only." (p. 164) She further illustrates: "I shouldn't mind learning why – why the sun do

shine on the just and the unjust alike … But that's what books will not tell me." (p. 164) Tess's words undertone the need for more liberal education – an education that she doesn't find in books. At the same time denotes to the idea of the ineffectual education that she and her likes receive, i.e. the kind of education that based on early childhood reading. From what has been observed by Tess exemplifies what Ioana Zirra obseves that "[a]ll the existing institutions, social or ideal (marriage, the Church, learning as a form of disciplined thinking) cooperate in undoing them." **26**

From what has been mentioned, it turns out that education for Hardy included much more than scholastic reading; it should include everything that went into the formation of the rational mind. Through the character of Angel, Hardy explains his view of what education ought to be. According to the narrator, Angel,

> held that education had as yet but little affected the beats
> of emotion and impulse on which domestic happiness depends.
> It was probable that in the lapse of ages, improved systems
> of moral and intellectual training appreciably, perhaps
> considerably, elevate the involuntary and even the un-
> conscious instincts of human nature; but up the present day
> culture, as far as he could see, might be said to have affected
> only the mental epiderm of those lives which had been
> brought under its influence. (p. 214)

The issue of liberal education is still explored by Hardy through another stage of Tess Durbeyfield's experiences. After her marriage to Angel Clare, then his hypocritical desertion to her, when she tells him about her past, Tess's simple education again does not aid her much to face the new challenges. After certain economic difficulties Tess decides to visit Angel's parents as well as to get information about her husband. On her way home, when she failed to meet them, Tess accidently overhears a remark of one of two young men who appear to be Angel's brothers, who on seeing Mercy Chant, "regretting [Angel's] precipitancy in throwing himself away upon a dairymaid." (p. 384) The representation of Mercy Chant, the only daughter of a friend and neighbor of the Clares and whom Angel Clare's parents hope he will marry, as a well educated woman is clearly intended to stress the ideal picture of the educated woman who is seen as more worthy than the uneducated one. Even for Tess, when she tries "to throw up her veil on this return journey, as if to let the world see that she could at least exhibit a face such as Mercy Chant could not show" (p. 386), she concludes: "[i]t is nothing – it is nothing! … [n]obody loves it; nobody sees it. Who cares about the looks of a castaway like [her]!" (p. 387)

On the return trip Tess also is reunited with Alec d'Urberville, who has converted to a minister. At seeing her he decides to pursue her. After several days of her back, Alec joined her at Flintcomb-Ash. When she tells him about her ordeal, because of him, Alec puts the blame on himself as well as on her ignorance, which in turn, arose because of an ignorant family. He argues:

> …what a blind young thing you were as to possibilities!
> I say in all earnestness that it is a shame for parents to

> bring up their girls in such dangerous ignorance of the gins and nets that the wicked may set for them, whether their motive to be good one or the result of simple in - difference." (p. 406)

Through their conversation, Hardy, on Alec's tongue, condemns women's subjection to men, which is also due to their ignorance. He tells her "whatever your dear husband believed you accept, and whatever he rejected you reject, without the least inquiry or reasoning on your own part. That's just like you women. Your mind is enslaved to his." (p. 413) But Tess explained that "because he knew everything!." (p. 413) She sees in her husband a man who can encounter the world with his huge knowledge. The conversation between Tess and Alec, as Hardy illustrates, "might possibly have been paralleled in many a work of the pedigree ranging from the *Dictionnaire Philosophique* to Huxley's Essays." (p. 414) On another occasion when they discuss certain religious issues, Tess fails to cope with him. She, as Hardy states, "tried to argue, and tell him that he had mixed in his dull brain two matters, theology and morals, which in the primitive days of mankind had been quite distinct. But … to her being a vessel of emotion rather than reasons, she could not get on." (p. 425)

Inspite of the new shape that is being formed within the agricultural scene, time for Tess is standstill. The mobility of the agricultural world pushes her and her family, which consists of Widow Joan, her sister 'Liza-Lu, her brother Abraham and the younger children, along with other cottagers, to seek refuge in other places. The whole scene seems to indicate the picture of the new man who has to cope with the new changing world. This cannot be completed only through new kind of education as can be seen through the story line drawn for the heroine by the novelist. At last Joan Derbeyfield, who earlier hoped that Tess's journey "would; and likely enough 'twould lead to some noble gentleman marrying her" (p. 30), realizes that marriage is not a refuge for women when she tells Tess: "what is the use of your playing at marrying gentleman, if it leaves us like this!" (p. 468). The difficulties experienced by Tess and her family, in addition to the appearance of Alec again in her life, lead Tess to fall in his trap once again. Her ignorance made her as a sort of foreign creature of another environment easily caught by others, like the pheasants which are easily hunted by the hunters and "her fortunes are of no more consequence than those of birds and flies" **27** as Pinion sees it. When Angel returned and found her lives with Alec he leaves her, the matter that pushes Tess to act with the aid of a knife, the only means that a person like her could find, to kill Alec and ends her sorrow. Eventually the author brings the novel to a tragic close when his ill-fortuned heroine ends hanged. Thereby he tells the bitter truth and achieves the argument made by St. Jerome that he believes in: "If an offence come out of the truth, better is it that the offence come than that the truth be concealed." **28** According to Jean R. Brooks "Tess dies, but the meaning of her life, and of the whole book, lies in her vibrant humanity." **29** Hence, Dorothy Van Ghent sees Tess "too humanly adequate for evolutionary ethics to comment upon …" **30**

Thus, the character of Tess Derbeyfield is chosen by Hardy to deliver a certain meaning. Through her he has developed an approach to all those women who have suffered a lot because of their illiteracy or of their simple and narrow education. In the novel much of the appeal of the character of Tess depends on her realization of her ignorance and of her inappropriate education. Her experience has been at the center of the novel from its beginning, and practically everything

that has happened to her has been related to her poor educational level. Thereby, the solution, in part, is observed through more broad education, or more precisely liberal education. In fact the call for liberal education for women comes to the forefront of much of the scenes of the novel. Most of the conversations of the principal characters revolve around the need of women, in particular, for more broad education – an education that covers all issues, such as, scholastic education; sexual education against harassment; religious education … etc. Through his novel Hardy shows by practical example the danger of limited education, and reflects in reverse the virtue of giving women a liberal education and to give them opportunities to laid foundation for their future. An educated woman, as the novelist tries to show, will not be prone to error or fall as an easy prey. Moreover, what Hardy wants to say through *Tess of the D' Urbervilles* is that education helps women to secure a descent life and escape at least a little bit of the pressure that enforced upon them by the complexities of life. His ideas were not merely philosophical. Tess was his practical project through which he shows the urgent need for enlightenment for women which in part emits from education.

And last but not least the current study tries to re-advocate and to reconsider the question of women's education as it has to fit in with the requirements of the times. As every day proves to us the magnitude of the problems that women face in their lives, especially if we know that women perform more than 50 percent of the work the matter that increases their vulnerability to harassment as is common in the present day. Thereby the research has shown Thomas Hardy's novel as an invitation to read between the lines and understand its author's message.

Notes

1- Irving Howe, (1967), *Thomas Hardy*, (New York: Macmillan), p. 109.

2-Usigned, "Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)", www.humanism.org.uk/humanism/…/**thomas-hardy** (20-5-2012), p. 1.

3- Dr. Andrzej Diniejko, (2010), "Thomas Hardy. A Biographical Sketch", www.victorianweb.org/authors/hardy/bio.html, (20-5-2012), p. 1 .

4- Helena Wojtczak, "Women's Status in Mid 19th-Century England - A Brief Overview", www.hastingspress.co.uk/history/19/overview.htm. (24-6-2012), p. 1.

5- ibid.

6- ibid.

7- Philippa Howden Chapman and Ichiro Kawachi ,(2006), "Paths to and from poverty in late 19th century novels", www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov ‹ ... ‹ v.60, (1-7-2012), p. 6 .

8- ibid.

9- ibid.

10- Sperry, (2008), "Women's Education: Results of Changed Attitudes in the 19th Century", www.writework.com/.../women-s-education-results-... (28-6- 2012), p. 1.

11- ibid.

12- ibid.

13- Unsigned, "John Stuart Mill". en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Stuart_Mill (1-6-2012), p. 6.

14- David Cecil, (2008), "The Elizabethan Tradition and Hardy's Talent", in *Essays in Criticism*, (ed.) Dr. Raghukul Tilak, (New Delhi: Rama Brothers), p. 418.

15- F. B. Pinion, (1968), *A Hardy Companion (A guide to the works of Thomas Hardy and their background)*, (London: the Macmillan and Press LID), p. 208.

16- Philippa Howden Chapman and Ichiro Kawachi, p. 9.

17- Chen Zhen, "Tess in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" www.ritsumei. ac.jp/acd/cg/lt/rb/600/.../chen.PDF (20-11-2011), p. 1.

18- Unsigned, "Liberal education", en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Liberal_education (4-7-2012), p.1.

19- ibid.

20- See "What is Liberal Education?", Association of American Colleges & Universities. Cited in "Liberal education", en.wikipedia.org/wiki/_Liberal_education (4-7-2012), p. 1.

21- Thomas Henry Huxley, "From A Liberal Education 1 – A Game of Chess", www.ww norton.com/.../27636_Vict_U12_Huxley.p.. (30-7-2012), p. 2.

22-Thomas Hardy, (1960), "preface" to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* with an introduction by F. B. Pinion, (London: Macmillan and Company Limited) p. xxi .

23- Lionel Johnson, (2008), "The Argument" in *Essays in Criticism*, (ed.) Dr. Raghukul Tilak, (New Delhi: Rama Brothers), p. 389.

24- Thomas Hardy, (1960), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (London: Macmillan and Company Limited), p. 22, with an introduction by F. B. Pinion. All the subsequent quotations are taken from this edition.

25- Arnold Kettle, (2008), "*Tess* as a Moral Fable: A Marxian Interpretation", in *Essays in Criticism*, ed. Dr. Raghukul Tilak, (New Delhi: Rama Brothers), p. 439.

26- Ioana Zirra, "The last Phase of the Victorian Novel: Thomas Hardy as a Prototype of the Realistic Novel's Self–Alienation at the end of the Victorian Age", ebooks.unibuc.ro/lls/Ioanna Zirra-VictorianAge/10.htm (14-12-2011), p. 2.

27- F. B. Pinion, in "introduction" to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, p. xiii.

28- Thomas Hardy, "preface" to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, p. xxi.

29- Jean R. Brooks, (1971), *Thomas Hardy - the Poetic Structure*, (London: W & J Mackay & Co Ltd, p. 253.

30- Dorothy Van Ghent, (1963), "On Tess of the D'Urbervilles", in *Hardy: A Collection of Critical Essays*, (ed.) Albert J. Guerard, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice- Hall), p. 79.

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خلاصة

من بين الحقوق التي عانت المرأة في سبيل الحصول عليها وما زالت هي التعليم. إذ أن الكثير من المجتمعات ما زالت تنكر هذا الحق والبعض الآخر حتى وأن أعترف به، منحهُ ولكن بشكل محدود، أي تعليماً بسيطاً لا يتعدى معرفة القراءة والكتابة وفي أحسن الحالات كان تعليماً لكسب معرفة ما تؤهلها فقط للحصول على عمل. وبعد خروج المرأة للعمل لرغبة في إثبات وجودها أو إضطراراً لتطور الحياة وتعقدها لم يعد هذا النوع من التعليم كافياً لمساعدتها على مواجهة المعوقات التي قد تواجهها في حياتها اليومية. فهي تحتاج إلى نوع آخر من التعليم بحيث يكون مُكمّلاً للتعليم الأكاديمي – أي تعليماً أكثرتطوراً وإنفتاحاً يساعدها على التأقلم مع التغيرات والتحديات اليومية في العمل وفي الشارع و في كل مكان .

ولعلّ الجانب المشرق في هذه القضية هي تلك الأصوات المتجردة من الأنانية والتي جاءت من مختلف أصقاع الأرض لتنادي بضرورة تعليم المرأة والتي ترجمّت أما بقول مأثور أو قصيدة أو روايةً . وعلى سبيل المثال لا الحصر قال المفكر العربي ابن باديس: " إذا علمت رجلاً فقد علمت فرداً .. وإذا علمت إمرأةً فقد علمت أمّة." أما على مستوى العالم الغربي فقد نادى العديد من رجالات الساسة والأدب بضرورة تعليم وتثقيف المرأة لأهميتهُ في تطور المجتمع. ولقد ذهب الشاعر والروائي الإنكليزي توماس هاردي إلى أبعد من ذلك منادياً بتعليم المرأة تعليماً ليبرالياً وهذا ما تضمّنته روايته الشهيرة (**تس سليلة دوبرفيل**) والذي يتضح من خلال رسمهُ لمصير فتاة قروية كان تعليمها البسيط وجهلها أحدى أسباب مأساتها.