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## Tess of the d'Urbervilles and the "New Edition" of Desperate Remedies

by LAWRENCE JONES

IN THE autumn of 1884, Thomas Hardy was approached by the recently established publishing firm of Ward and Downey concerning the republication of his first novel, *Desperate Remedies*. Although it had been published in America by Henry Holt in his *Leisure Hour* series in 1874, the novel had not appeared in England since the first, anonymous publication by Tinsley Brothers in 1871. That first edition, in three volumes, had consisted of a printing of 500 (only 280 of which had been sold at list price).<sup>1</sup> Since that time Hardy had published eight more novels and had established himself to the extent that Charles Kegan Paul could refer to him in the *British Quarterly Review* in 1881 as the true "successor of George Eliot,"<sup>2</sup> and Havelock Ellis could open a survey article in the *Westminster Review* in 1883 with the remark that "The high position which the author of *Far from the Madding Crowd* holds among contemporary English novelists is now generally recognized."<sup>3</sup> As his reputation grew, his earlier novels were republished in England in one-volume editions: *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, and *The Hand of Ethelberta* in 1877, *Under the Greenwood Tree* in 1878, *The Return of the Native* in 1880, *A Laodicean* in 1882, and *Two on a Tower* in 1883. Aside from the relatively recent *The Trumpet-Major* (of 1880), in 1884 only *Desperate Remedies* had not been reissued. Edmund Downey, co-founder of Ward and Downey, had just left the employ of William Tinsley and thus would have known both of the smallness of the original edition of *Desperate Remedies* and of Hardy's retention of the copyright. He must have anticipated that a reprinting of Hardy's first novel would sell well, and thus, as Carl J. Weber has noted, his letter to Hardy must "have been among the very first inquiries sent out by the new firm in its attempt to acquire a publishing list."<sup>4</sup> Hardy, however, was not interested, and replied that he had "decided to let *Desperate Remedies* remain out of print for the present."<sup>5</sup>

1. The account from Tinsley Brothers is reprinted in Richard Little Purdy, *Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study* (Oxford, 1954), facing p. 5; the details concerning Hardy's publishing history in the following paragraphs are also from Purdy's book.

2. "Mr. Hardy's Novels," LXXIII, 342; rpt. in *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage*, ed. R. G. Cox (London, 1970), p. 79. The attribution to Kegan Paul is made by Michael Millgate, *Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist* (London, 1971), p. 121.

3. "Thomas Hardy's Novels," CXIX, n.s. LXIII, 334; rpt. in Cox, p. 103.

4. *The Letters of Thomas Hardy: Transcribed from the Original Autographs Now in the Colby College Library*, ed. Carl J. Weber (Waterville, Maine, 1954), p. 25.

5. *Letters*, p. 25.

In the next five years, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *The Woodlanders* further enhanced Hardy's reputation (the latter was especially successful, selling almost 5,000 copies in two years, mostly in the form of a one-volume reissue). In January, 1889, Ward and Downey approached him again about republishing *Desperate Remedies*. On January 16 Hardy replied that he would consider their offer, but that "It is so long since I read over the story that I shall have to look into it again," and promised an answer in several days.<sup>6</sup> On January 20 he wrote again to offer leasing the copyright to them for five years, and on January 22 he returned a signed agreement, asking them for a copy of the original edition on which he could "make all necessary corrections." The "New Edition" appeared in 1889 with a "Prefatory Note" by Hardy dated January 1889 in which he apologized for the book as one "written nineteen years ago, at a time when he was feeling his way to a method." He further indicated that now he saw it as too much a conventional sensation novel, but that as "some of the scenes, and at least one or two of the characters, have been deemed not unworthy of a little longer preservation," he was allowing it to be reissued.<sup>8</sup>

Thus in January 1889 Hardy reread *Desperate Remedies* at least once and probably twice (for he did make certain "necessary corrections" to the first edition, including one slight bowdlerization at the request of the publisher; Carl Weber has noted five deletions from the first edition, and there may have been other changes also).<sup>9</sup> The date is important, for Hardy had begun *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in the autumn of 1888, and was well into it by the time he reread and corrected *Desperate Remedies* for the new edition. The rereading of his first novel at this time had some effect on *Tess*, for there are definite echoes of the earlier novel in it, ranging from similarities in imagery to clear parallels of concept and phrasing in certain key passages and scenes.

Several images used to describe Cytherea Graye in *Desperate Remedies* are distantly echoed in descriptions of Tess. F. B. Pinion has noted the similarity of the image of Cytherea feeling herself with Aeneas Manston "as one in a boat without oars, drifting with closed eyes down a river" (p. 252) and Angel's view of Tess with Alec d'Urberville as one allowing her body "to drift, like a corpse upon the current, in a direction dissociated from its living will."<sup>10</sup> There is a closer resemblance of image between the description of Cytherea's reproachful gaze at Edward Springrove when she thinks that he has deceived her, and Tess's gaze of defiance at Alec when he is pursuing her. Cytherea looked at Springrove

6. *Letters*, p. 27.

7. *Letters*, p. 28.

8. *Desperate Remedies* (London, 1953), p. v; hereafter cited in the text.

9. "Hardy's Deference to His Publishers," *Colby Library Quarterly*, I (1945), 148-50.

10. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (London, 1974), p. 429; future references will be included in the text. See Pinion, *A Hardy Companion: A Guide to the Works of Thomas Hardy and their Background* (London, 1968), p. 18; J. T. Laird has pointed out that the image of the floating corpse was not inserted in the novel until the 1892 edition (*The Shaping of "Tess of the d'Urbervilles"* [Oxford, 1975]).

and "blamed him mutely and with her eyes, like a captured sparrow" (p. 52), while Tess with Alec is pictured as "turning her eyes to him with the hopeless defiance of the sparrow's gaze before its captor twists its neck" (p. 379). The image of the bird for Cytherea also appears later, when she is trying to escape from marriage to Manston: "Terrified, driven into a corner, panting and fluttering about for some loophole of escape, yet still shrinking from the idea of being Manston's wife, the poor little bird endeavoured to find out from Miss Aldclyffe whether it was likely Owen would be well treated in hospital" (p. 249). The relationship here to the oft-noticed reiterated imagery of the hunted animal and bird in *Tess* is clear.<sup>11</sup>

The corpse and bird images discussed above occur in the second half of *Tess*, which was written after November, 1889.<sup>12</sup> The passages in *Tess* more obviously drawn from *Desperate Remedies* appear in the first half of the book, composed between October, 1888, and October, 1889, and thus closer to the time of Hardy's rereading and revising of his first novel. In one of these passages, the parallel is mainly of concept, with a slight congruence of phrasing. In *Desperate Remedies*, Adelaide Hinton is described as "a girl of that kind which mothers praise as not forward, by way of contrast, when disparaging those warmer ones with whom loving is an end and not a means" (p. 131). In *Tess* a parallel distinction is made between farm girls and daughters of the middle class: "in the fields and pastures to 'sigh gratis' is by no means deemed waste; love-making being here more often accepted inconsiderately and for its own sweet sake than in the carking anxious homes of the ambitious, where a girl's craving for an establishment paralyzes her healthy thought of a passion as an end" (p. 215).<sup>13</sup> In both passages a similar "ends and means" contrast is used, but as the adjective "healthy" in the passage from *Tess* emphasizes, the tone in the later novel is much more outspoken.

In other passages of *Tess*, the resemblance to *Desperate Remedies* is still relatively distant, a matter of similar images and motifs rather than of direct verbal parallels, but is larger in scope than merely isolated phrases or images. Thus there is a resemblance of both motif and structure between the music scene in *Desperate Remedies* (itself drawn from an earlier scene in the unpublished *The Poor Man and the Lady*)<sup>14</sup> and

11. See Philip Mahone Griffith, "The Image of the Trapped Animal in Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*," *Tulane Studies in English*, XII (1964), 85-94.

12. For the dating of the different parts of *Tess*, see Laird, ch. 1, and Purdy, pp. 71-73.

13. In the manuscript, the original wording, crossed out, was "by Frome river love-making is more often accepted for its own sweet sake than in the carking anxious homes of the genteel, where a house for the body is more thought of than a passion for the heart as a thing in itself" (British Museum Additional Manuscript 38 182, f. 247); even the revised version of the manuscript has "her natural thought," the adjective not being changed to "healthy" until the 1895 edition (see, for example, the Harper edition of 1900, based on the 1895 text, p. 66).

14. See *An Indiscretion in the Life of an Heiress*, ed. Carl J. Weber (Baltimore, 1935), pp. 97-98. For the relationship between that story and *The Poor Man and the Lady*, see William R. Rutland, *Thomas*

that in *Tess*. In the earlier novel Hardy describes in some detail Cytherea's response to Manston's playing on the organ:

Cytherea had never heard music in the completeness of full orchestral power, and the tones of the organ, which reverberated with considerable effect in the comparatively small space of the room, heightened by the elemental strife of light and sound outside, moved her to a degree out of proportion to the actual power of the mere notes, practised as was the hand that produced them. The varying strains . . . shook and bent her to themselves, as a gushing brook shakes and bends a shadow cast across its surface. . . . She was swayed into emotional opinions concerning the strange man before her; new impulses of thought came with new harmonies and entered into her with a gnawing thrill. (pp. 153-54)

The passage describing Tess's response to Angel playing the harp is similar:

Tess had heard those notes in the attic above her head. Dim, flattened, constrained by their confinement, they had never appealed to her as now, when they wandered in the still air with a stark quality like that of nudity. To speak absolutely, both instrument and execution were poor; but the relative is all, and as she listened Tess, like a fascinated bird, could not leave the spot. . . . She undulated upon the thin notes of the second-hand harp, and their harmonies passed like breezes through her, bringing tears into her eyes. (pp. 161-62)

The only direct verbal parallel is in the use of the word "harmonies," but there is a striking parallel of motif and sequence. Both scenes occur in striking settings described in detail: the first in Manston's parlor in the Old Manor House at sundown during a violent thunderstorm, the second in the old garden at Talbothays at sundown on a warm spring evening. Both focus on the heroine's powerful and implicitly sexual response to music played by an attractive and relatively unknown male. Both descriptions of the heroine's emotions move from an objective omniscient explanation for the subjective effect of the music to a metaphorical account of that effect. In each case, the account begins with a comparison of the musical experience to previous, less moving experiences, and in each case the narrator explicitly distinguishes the heroine's subjective response from a more objective account. In each case, the subjective effect of the music is compared to a natural force—a brook or a breeze, and the heroine's response is given in physical terms ("swayed . . . a gnawing thrill" and "undulated . . . bringing tears"). In each case the heroine is held to the spot as by a spell, Tess being like a "fascinated bird," while Cytherea later remembers being "fascinated": "O, how is it that man has so fascinated me?" was all she could think. Her own self, as she had sat spell-bound before him, was all she could see" (p. 155).

One entire scene in *Tess* seems to have been suggested by a single passage in *Desperate Remedies* describing Cytherea's and Springrove's emotional states as they first begin to fall in love:

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Hardy: *A Study of his Writings and their Background* (Oxford, 1938), pp. 109-33. Drawing upon Edmund Gosse's account of a conversation with Hardy, Rutland has taken the scene in *An Indiscretion* to be a slightly revised version of a similar scene in *The Poor Man* (p. 127).

How blissful it all is at first. Perhaps, indeed, the only bliss in the course of love which can truly be called Eden-like is that which prevails immediately after doubt has ended and *before reflection has set in*—at the dawn of the emotion, when it is not recognized by name, and before the consideration of what this love is, has given birth to the consideration of what difficulties it tends to create; when on the man's part, the mistress appears to the mind's eye in picturesque, hazy, and fresh morning lights, and soft morning shadows. . . . (p. 43, my italics)

In *Tess*, there is a similar analysis of the state of Tess and Angel early in their relationship: "She, and Clare also, stood as yet on the debatable land between predilection and love; where no profundities have been reached; *no reflections have set in*, awkwardly inquiring, 'Whither does this new current tend to carry me? What does it mean to my future? How does it stand towards my past?' " (my italics). Here, as the italicized passages show, there is a more direct verbal parallel, while there is also a strong similarity of sequence and idea: the two passages deal with the same stage in a relationship, and each uses the phrase about "reflection" as a hinge to turn the discussion towards future difficulties. What is most striking, however, is the way in which the figurative imagery of the first passage recurs in the literal imagery of the scene just following the second passage. In that scene (really a description of a series of similar scenes), Tess and Angel are shown milking the Talbothays cows in the fields at dawn, and there is a lengthy description of the way Tess appears to Angel, transfigured by the morning light and shadows and the fog. Further, in their solitude, the two feel "as if they were Adam and Eve" (pp. 168–71), picking up the Eden illusion in the first passage. As Laird has said, "the early-morning meetings in the meadows are reminiscent of Eden before the Fall."<sup>15</sup> It is unlikely that the sequence in *Tess* was consciously drawn from the passage in the earlier book; rather, it is probable that Hardy's rereading of *Desperate Remedies* revived a chain of association which then was written into *Tess*. The richer, fuller realization of the potentialities of this chain of association in *Tess* shows how far Hardy had developed in finding an effective "objective correlative" for his insights.

Another passage in *Desperate Remedies* (itself a "prosing" of the earlier poem "She, to Him, II")<sup>16</sup> clearly influenced several important passages in *Tess*. In that passage, Cytherea, having married Manston, is lectured by her brother Owen on the need to be dutiful towards her husband even if she really loves Springrove. Finally he confronts her with her "duty to society." Her answer is a long speech on the subjectivity of all perception:

"Yes—my duty to society," she murmured. "But ah, Owen, it is difficult to adjust our outer and inner life with perfect honesty to all! Though it may be right to care more for the benefit of the many than for the indulgence of your own single self, when you consider

15. Laird, p. 58.

16. Millgate, pp. 34, 364.

that the many, and duty to them, only exist to you through your own existence, what can be said? What do our own acquaintances care about us? Not much. I think of mine. Mine will now (do they learn all the wicked frailty of my heart in this affair) look at me, smile sickly, and condemn me. And perhaps, far in time to come, when I am dead and gone, some other's accent, or some other's song, or thought, like an old one of mine, will carry them back to what I used to say, and hurt their hearts a little that they blamed me so soon. And they will pause just for an instant, and give a sigh to me, and think, 'Poor girl!' believing that they do great justice to my memory by this. But they will never, never realize that it was my single opportunity of existence, as well as of doing my duty, which they are regarding; they will not feel that what to them is but a thought, easily held in those two words of pity, 'Poor girl!' was a whole life to me; as full of hours, minutes, and peculiar minutes, of hopes and dreads, smiles, whisperings, tears, as theirs: that it was my world, what is to them their world, and they in that life of mine, however much I cared for them, only as the thought I seem to them to be. Nobody can enter into another's nature truly, that's what is so grievous." (pp. 275-76)

In *Tess* the basic ideas of Cytherea's speech are stated by the omniscient narrator in describing the response of Tess's friends to her plight as an unwed mother:

She might have seen that what had bowed her head so profoundly—the thought of the world's concern at her situation—was founded upon an illusion. She was not an existence, an experience, a passion, a structure of sensations, to anybody but herself. To all human-kind besides Tess was only a passing thought. Even to friends she was no more than a frequently passing thought. If she made herself miserable the livelong night and day it was only this much to them—"Ah, she makes herself unhappy." If she tried to be cheerful, to dismiss all care, to take pleasure in the daylight, the flowers, the baby, she could only be this idea to them—"Ah, she bears it very well." (p. 127)

Cytherea's defense of her self has been transformed into the narrator's defense of Tess. There are no direct verbal parallels with *Desperate Remedies*, but the sequence of ideas is remarkably similar: a general statement of the subjectivity of all perception, a general observation that the heroine is but a "thought" to other people, and a speculation as to how little her acquaintances thought (or would think) of her lapse from accepted morality (a speculation illustrated by hypothetical dialogue in each case).

The concept of the subjectivity of all perception is a recurring theme in *Tess*, and later there are direct verbal parallels with the passage from *Desperate Remedies*. Angel Clare is meditating upon his responsibility for Tess's happiness:

Tess was no insignificant creature to toy with and dismiss; but a woman living her precious life—a life which, to herself who endured or enjoyed it, possessed as great a dimension as the life of the mightiest to himself. Upon her sensations the whole world depended to Tess; through her existence all her fellow-creatures existed to her. . . . This consciousness upon which he had intruded was the single opportunity of existence ever vouchsafed to Tess by an unsympathetic First Cause—her all; her every and only chance. (p. 195)

The verbal parallels are clear: "the many . . . only exist to you through your own existence" and "through her existence all her fellow-creatures existed to her"; "my single opportunity of existence" and "her single

opportunity of existence." The reference in *Tess* to "an unsympathetic First Cause" (originally "a niggardly first cause" in the manuscript)<sup>17</sup> shows how Hardy was becoming more explicit in stating his basic ideas, but the concept is implicit in the earlier novel.

One further pair of parallel passages shows again both how Hardy unquestionably drew upon *Desperate Remedies* in *Tess* and how much more explicitly naturalistic his writing had become. The parallel passages are the description of the meeting of Adelaide and Cytherea, the rivals for Springrove's love in *Desperate Remedies*, and the description of the hopeless rivalry of the milkmaids with Tess for Angel's love. In the earlier novel, Hardy comments that the situation of rivalry "abstracted the differences which distinguished them as individuals, and left only the properties common to them as atoms of a sex" (p. 135, my italics). In *Tess*, he comments concerning the milkmaids and Tess that "The differences which distinguished them as individuals were abstracted by this passion, and each was but portion of one organism called sex" (p. 187, my italics). The verbal parallels are striking, far too close to be coincidental, and are the expression of an underlying continuity in perception. However, Hardy's increasingly explicit naturalism is shown in the use of "organism" (originally "homogeneity" in the manuscript)<sup>18</sup> and in the shift towards the more modern usage of the word "sex," marked by the absence of the indirect article in the passage from *Tess* (a usage dated in the OED from 1887). While a scientific perspective was implied by the term "properties" and the image of the atoms in the earlier passage, the more Zolaesque tone in the passage from *Tess* is marked.

Hardy, then, in *Tess* drew upon passages from his first published novel, probably because they were brought to mind by his rereading of them for a new edition at the same time as he was beginning work upon his new novel. The appearance of ideas, images, and phrases from a work of twenty years before in *Tess* shows the essential continuity of Hardy's "idiosyncratic mode of regard," while the greater explicitness of the passages in *Tess* shows how far Hardy had moved towards the more direct statement of his philosophical "seemings."

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17. Laird, pp. 48-49, 73.

18. British Museum Additional MS 38 182, f. 208.