HARDY'S DARK LADIES

by

LuJuana Wolfe Treadwell

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1966
STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This thesis has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at The University of Arizona and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this thesis are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgment of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the copyright holder.

SIGNED: [Signature]

APPROVAL BY THESIS DIRECTOR

This thesis has been approved on the date shown below:

[Signature]  May 3, 1966

CARL H. KETCHAM  Date
Associate Professor of English
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABSTRACT</th>
<th>iv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE DARK LADY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE DARK LADY IN BIOGRAPHY AND CRITICISM</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE DARK LADY IN MINOR ROLES</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE DARK LADY IN MAJOR ROLES</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. THE MAJOR DARK LADIES IN THEIR NOVELS</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. THE DARK LADY AS HARDY VIEWED HER</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITERATURE CITED</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The dark-haired, sexually attractive women who appear throughout Thomas Hardy's fiction—those I call his dark ladies—are a single, coherent group of characters probably modeled on his fiancée Tryphena Sparks. Hardy often uses the dark lady as a villainess, but he always makes her a fascinating figure and changes her again and again until finally it is with her that he creates women of tragic magnitude—Eustacia Vye and Tess Durbeyfield.

The three most important dark ladies, Eustacia, Tess, and Viviette Constantine, play similar dramatic and symbolic roles in their novels, embodying revolt against the accepted order of existence. The dark lady, who considers herself banished in an unhappy, unsympathetic world, knows that life is tragic. Love is her only hope for joy, and when she realizes that it will not last, she wants to extinguish the fiery glow that is her spirit and to end her existence forever. The dark lady's final appearance in Hardy's fiction is as the tragic heroine who stands for sensitive mankind against the senseless forces which are the universe in Hardy's view. She refuses to compromise her fine vision of life in order to survive in life as it is.
THE DARK LADY

The fact that Thomas Hardy's female characters frequently develop one from the other has been recognized and commented upon by critics; so, to a lesser degree, has the fact that there are two distinct kinds of female characters: the fair and pastoral, the dark and alien. However, the dark, alien ladies have been dismissed rather quickly as modern, hedonistic, eccentric figures who are essentially separate from the pastoral world of Hardy's fiction. Lucetta Farfrae and Felice Charmond are the most frequently discussed examples of this class; Eustacia Vye is sometimes classed with them. Although Eustacia presents a peculiar problem, the first two characters do seem to be agents outside the common life of the novels in which they appear. However, this does not justify dismissing them quickly, for the dark, alien women compose a far larger and more significant group of characters than is generally recognized. They are not outside the action of Hardy's fiction and are not merely persons introduced into the woodland setting to represent the unnatural influence of modern society. Rather, they are an integral part of Hardy's world and an essential element of his fiction. They evolve from the folk literature and traditional background of Wessex as much as do those characters who seem to be the essence of the pastoral--Marty South, Thomasin Yeobright, Bathsheba.
Everdene, and others. Furthermore, Lucetta and Felice are simply two manifestations of the dark lady, and they are extreme—not typical—examples of her.

A certain female character, dark haired, beautiful, full-figured, and sexually attractive, appears throughout Hardy's fiction. She is sometimes of minor importance, sometimes the principal character, but whatever her role she is a fascinating figure. She is not the typical English country girl as are Grace Melbury, Thomasin Yeobright, and the other fair women who are perhaps true to life but remain colorless and conventional when compared to the darker woman, who is physically and psychically distinct. Most of Hardy's women have brown hair; they are pretty, healthy, small or of average height. There are, however, other women whom Hardy describes as dark and beautiful. They have black or very dark brown hair; in figure they are tall and statuesque; their complexions are pale. They are described as rare women, not at all typical of the English countryside—these are the dark ladies.

They are distinct from the ordinary country girls psychologically as well as physically. Their origins are seldom rural: they are usually foreign, noble, or from the city. Their characters are not like those of the country girls, who are usually content with the life they lead, seeking only the happiness of a good marriage. The dark ladies are tragic figures, troubled, proud, enduring, doomed. They desire
the love of a man, but their longing is far more sexual than is that of
the fair women. Although the country girl may be a coquette, she is
usually innocent; the dark lady is always sexually experienced, never
a virgin. The passionate sexual love that consumes her is her central
motive. She remains loyal to her love unless circumstance forces her
to betray it.

There are numerous dark ladies in Hardy's novels and short
stories and each is a character essential to the story in which she
appears. Two of his most successful tragic heroines, Eustacia Vye
and Tess Durbeyfield, are dark ladies and are not, as is generally
believed, mere modifications of the more typical Hardy woman, the
pretty, fickle, fair heroine of the early novels and many of the short
stories. Eustacia, Tess, and a less satisfactory heroine, Viviette
Constantine, as well as several other characters are every one tall,
full-figured, dark haired beauties: tragic, isolated, powerful, seduc-
tive and sinister women.

The dark lady is distrusted by her fellow characters and often
by Hardy himself, whose attitude toward her is a shifting one, leaving
unresolved almost to the end the question of whether she is good or
evil. Hardy first distrusts, then understands the dark lady, but he
always makes her a highly attractive figure, more deeply and sensually
involved in life than the other characters. With her he creates women of
a magnitude which can sustain tragedy, characters who are tragic heroines.
The dark lady nearly always seems evil, and in her appearances in the short stories and as a minor character in the novels, she is usually a villainess or is at least among the sinister forces which thwart the protagonist. Cytherea Aldclyffe, Xanthippe Barnet, Helena Hall, Lucetta, and Felice all act in opposition to the protagonist. The role of Viviette Constantine, Eustacia Vye, and Rhoda Brook is somewhat ambiguous: each becomes the protagonist, although it is difficult to determine whether or not she was meant to be. Tess Durbeyfield, Hardy's "pure woman," is the only dark lady treated with full sympathy and the only one who is a consummate heroine.

And even Tess is suspect in the eyes of society. Though individual characters may understand and love her, society as embodied in her mother, Alex, Angel, and ultimately the hangman, cannot comprehend her nobility. Her fellow characters can never fully comprehend the dark lady, whom they consider decadent, witch-like, or evil. In The Return of the Native, Eustacia is seen on Rainbarrow Hill, alienated from the society through which Hardy and his readers see her. The novel is told from a point of view closer to that of Mrs. Yeobright and her son than of Eustacia; to them she is perverse, weird, and selfish. Tess, however, possesses her novel. Thomas Hardy and his readers see its events unfold as Tess herself experiences them. She is outside society, but the author is outside it with her and it is society
which seems to be perverse and narrow, not Tess, who is Hardy's most successful dark lady.
THE DARK LADY IN BIOGRAPHY AND CRITICISM

While a careful reading of his fiction will reveal the existence of Hardy's dark ladies and a more rigorous examination reveals how he uses them, new critical studies and methods have simplified the task and opened new means of analysis, and a very recent biographical discovery has shed new light on the possible genesis of these characters.

It has long been recognized that Hardy based most of his fiction on personal experiences and his characters on people he knew. Most of the stories take place near Hardy's home in the region he called Wessex. Many of the male characters are musicians, young architects, or country-born men trying to succeed in the world of learning; and many female characters are similar to Hardy's first wife, Emma Lavinia Gifford, who was, according to the biographer Weber and others, an undemonstrative, rather cold, pious, conventionally religious woman who was proud of being from a higher social position than her husband and tried to improve him. It has been assumed that the beloved woman of Hardy's poems is Emma and that Hardy loved her


2. Ibid., p. 160.

3. Ibid., p. 163.
very much until the problems of their marriage stifled his affection and the marriage became "neither delightfully happy nor terribly unhappy."^4

However, a startling recent biographical discovery suggests that Emma was not the woman to whom the love poems were addressed and that Hardy may never have loved her passionately. The discovery, made by Lois Deacon, is that from 1867 to 1872 Thomas Hardy was engaged to his cousin, Miss Tryphena Sparks of Puddletown, Dorset. ^5 This discovery has been generally accepted by scholars. ^6 Indeed, Professor Richard Purdy suspected that the lady mentioned in the Preface to Jude the Obscure was the Phena of the poem, and he had already identified her as Tryphena Sparks. ^7

Miss Deacon's discovery relates directly to the dichotomy I find between Hardy's dark ladies and the fair ones, for while Tryphena Sparks' hair was very dark chestnut, her eyes dark, and her features

---


^5 Lois Deacon, Tryphena and Thomas Hardy (Beaminster, Dorset, 1962), p. 11.


^7 Beatty, p. 80.
dignified, Emma's hair was corn colored and her complexion was fair. Furthermore, although the facts of Thomas Hardy's engagement to Tryphena have as yet only been suggested and hinted at in print, they do indicate that her personality was like those of the dark ladies and that their love resembled the loves of the dark ladies.

Passages in The Early Life make no reference to Tryphena except when Hardy hears of her death, and even then the allusion does not name her. However, it has long been recognized that Hardy tried to keep the intimate facts of his life private, and thus the content of The Early Life does not by any means preclude the existence of Tryphena. In fact, several things in The Early Life make the engagement seem possible. During this period Hardy was living with his parents near the Sparks' home writing Far From the Madding Crowd, most of which takes place in the Puddletown region. Furthermore, Hardy does not sound particularly enamored of Emma in the notebook entries quoted in The Early Life. Whatever his feelings were for

8. Deacon, Tryphena, p. 11.
10. Ibid., p. 103.
11. Ibid.
Emma, it remains quite possible that he loved Tryphena passionately and that he simply left this important episode in his life out of his biography.

Miss Deacon has written two biographies of Hardy which interpret his life in view of the engagement, but they are as yet unpublished, and the two slender pamphlets which she has published contain only hints and suggestions of the relationship between Hardy and Tryphena. The historical facts which she gives are that the romance began in the summer of 1867 when Hardy was twenty-seven and Tryphena was sixteen, just after his return to Bockhampton from London where he had worked for five years as an architect. Tryphena, who lived a little over two miles from Hardy, often walked with him on the heath which separated their homes, the Egdon Heath of the novels. The two were engaged for almost five years, but "circumstance" eventually separated them and Tryphena returned his ring. In December of 1877, she married Charles Gale.

These particulars are certainly important to the present study. However, perhaps even more relevant are the suggested details of the


engagement. Miss Deacon will not say what separated the lovers, although she does say that her biographies tell this and hints at several causes, often asserting that "the true story of Hardy and Tryphena" appears in several of the novels, particularly in The Return of the Native. She suggests that the cause of the separation was a secret suddenly revealed to the lovers:

The poem Neutral Tones (dated 1867) ... belongs to the sad winter day when Thomas and Tryphena first knew a ghastly truth which would prevent them from ever marrying each other, as they had planned. The shocking news did not at once separate them, but it was an ominous first link in a heavy, shackling iron chain of untoward circumstance, which eventually dragged them apart--though in bondage forever.

Perhaps the secret was learning of their kinship. Miss Deacon's publisher suggests in a letter that Tryphena was not Hardy's cousin, but his niece. If this were one of the reasons for their separation it would associate Tryphena in another way with the dark ladies, for many of their loves are characterized as somewhat unnatural.

Another possible reason for their parting is the suggestion that Tryphena was not a virgin and that Hardy, like Angel Clare, demanded that she be. In a lengthy passage Miss Deacon hints at this possibility. She says that the She, to Him sonnets are Hardy's poetic

revelation of imagined or actual conversations between himself and Tryphena. She quotes a sonnet which she says Tryphena speaks to Thomas Hardy:

Some other's feature, accent, thought like mine
Will carry you back to what I used to say,
And bring some memory of your love's decline,
Then you may pause awhile and think, "Poor Jade!"
And yield a sigh to me. . . .

"Poor Jade"—can this be Tryphena, speaking to Thomas? Yes, indeed—and the date of her plea is approximately 1869, while she was at College in London, when a ghastly complication entered their personal lives, and Hardy temporarily spurned his beloved, quarreling at the same time with his dearest man friend, Horace Moule. . . . "Clym Yeobright" called "Eustacia" a jade . . . "Angel Clare" called "Tess" a jade . . . "Sue" in Jude the Obscure was thought by almost everyone to be a jade . . . "Elfride," of A Pair of Blue Eyes, was deemed by two of her lovers to be a jade. 21

Was Tryphena's sexual experience like that of the dark ladies? This is certainly what Miss Deacon implies.

Whatever the causes of their parting, they were evidently shocking and ironic, for Miss Deacon says, "It was always essential that the love of Tom and Tryffie should be kept secret—progressively essential, as drama piled up on drama in their private lives, and ironic circumstance complicated ironic circumstance." 22 The two parted eventually, but only after having enjoyed "a period of very precarious,


22. Ibid., p. 15.
uneasy and secret happiness together—about which we are told a great deal, indirectly, in *The Return of the Native* and also in *Tess*. After that, plans were made for the re-shaping of their lives.²³ In *Two on a Tower*, there is a similar period of happiness when Swithin and Viviette, secretly married, live together in his cottage. So each of the major dark ladies experiences a "marriage" like that of Thomas Hardy and Tryphena.

Although Tryphena later returned Hardy's ring and each married another person, Miss Deacon contends that he loved Tryphena throughout his life and that "after the complicated Tryphena tragedy ... Thomas Hardy held a very poor opinion of himself for the remainder of his long life,"²⁴ and that he continued to write of Tryphena: "Sometimes he spoke for her, and sometimes for himself, but always his sublime intention was to immortalise her."²⁵

Miss Deacon's reviewers doubt that Tryphena was the sole inspiration for Hardy's women, although the fact that she inspired some of them is not questioned. Perhaps Julia Martin, the lady of the manor whom Hardy knew as a boy, was another source of his dark ladies. Hardy himself said that "his feeling for her was almost that of a

²³ Ibid.
²⁴ Ibid., p. 20.
²⁵ Ibid., p. 23.
and it seems likely that he had her in mind when he wrote of the early, older and noble dark ladies. His main inspiration, however, was probably Tryphena. Paterson believes "that Tryphena Sparks was the original in a partial sense at least of Eustacia Vye. . . ." The Notes and Queries reviewer accepts the evidence for the engagement as authentic, but says that Miss Deacon slights Emma in her interpretation of Tryphena's influence on Hardy's literary works. This may well be true, for it seems possible that each woman inspired Hardy, Emma with the corn-colored hair could have been the model for the fair women and Tryphena the dark-haired together with the lady of the manor could have been the original of the dark ladies. This suggestion does not imply that each female character is simply a portrait of one of the women Hardy knew best or that one is heroine and the other villainess; it implies only that Emma and Tryphena were distinct types—evidently in personality as well as appearance—and that Hardy could have used his knowledge of the two women in creating characters.

If this is the case, it sheds new light on my thesis, reinforcing it with biographical evidence. However, the thesis was conceived before reading Miss Deacon's pamphlets and it does not depend on


27. Paterson, p. 47.

biographical evidence. There is sufficient proof in the novels and stories themselves to make the study complete. Indeed, many critics have pointed out the dichotomy of character types and the isolation and sexual motivation of some of Hardy's characters.

There has been enough criticism of Hardy--some useless, some valuable--to fill a good-sized library. The largely unsatisfactory older criticism which discusses Hardy's pessimism, realism, and architectonic plots has in recent years been augmented by criticism which applies new methods to the fiction and discusses its mythical, archetypal, psychological, and symbolic aspects. This new criticism treats Hardy with the kind of respect it gives twentieth-century writers and searches in his works for those things which distinguish and empower great twentieth-century fiction. Instead of revealing his weaknesses as stylist, realist, philosopher, it points out something of what still draws readers to Hardy's fiction, those fine things that make many of his short stories and novels perhaps great, at least immensely readable fiction. It is mainly upon these new methods that this essay will be based, for they do more to reveal Hardy's achievements as a novelist than do the older methods.

Hardy is a peculiar writer. His eccentricities, faux pas, and lapses in taste have often been noticed and written of. However, despite some gross weaknesses, his novels remain great achievements, and while the new critical methods are not satisfactory for treating many
pre-twentieth century writers, in Hardy's case they are unusually valid. In the first place, although Hardy was an educated man, his home and imaginative center was the country he called Wessex. It is the novels which are set there and peopled by rural characters which are the most successful. It has become a commonplace of criticism that folk myths and beliefs are a strong part of Hardy's novels, and as a result, archetypal and mythical criticism is valid and indeed essential to a study of Hardy.

Donald Davidson's criticism of Hardy, typical of the mythical interpretation, establishes a good basis for my study. Davidson describes Hardy's conception of plot as an extension of the traditional ballad and oral tale. Converting traditional narrative into contemporary fiction, Hardy provided Wessex as setting, "a world in which typical ballad heroes and heroines can flourish with a thoroughly rationalized 'mythology' to sustain them."\(^{29}\) Hardy created a special world where the characters he adapted either consciously or unconsciously from traditional tales could exist.

According to Davidson, several peculiar characteristics of Hardy's fiction are explained by its close relationship to oral tradition; for instance, why the novels "have the rounded, often intricate plot and

the balance and antithesis of characters associated with traditional fiction from ancient time, "why they resemble classical drama, why "action, not description, is always foremost; and why the event . . . rather than motive or psychology, or comment" dominates. 30 It is also the reason folk-like superstition is often in the background of the novels, and why Hardy uses coincidence which, Davidson claims, Hardy deliberately uses in place of the miraculous elements of ballads. 31

Richard Carpenter agrees that Hardy's fiction is archetypal, pointing out that the situations and symbols of myth, "the scapegoat, the fertility ritual, the night journey, the dying god, the rebirth theme," all appear in Hardy's work. 32 "The mythic significance of the earth-air-fire-water, of light and darkness, is everywhere evident," he continues. 33 This latter is an evident attribute of the dark lady, who always acts in countermovement to the light, fair men and women, and who is usually accompanied by images of fire.

When Davidson applies the mythical analysis of Hardy's fiction to the character-making, which he says is "the most striking feature of Hardy's habit of mind, as traditional narrator," 34 he makes clear one

30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., p. 18.
32. Carpenter, p. 35.
33. Ibid.
34. Davidson, p. 19.
of the basic differences between the types of characters inhabiting Hardy's novels. The changeless characters of epic, saga, romance, and ballad Hardy assigns to both major and minor roles, generally setting them "in juxtaposition with one or two characters of a more changeful or modern type. The interplay between the two kinds of characters is the focus of the struggle that makes the story." 35 It is among the modern, "changeful" characters--those Davidson describes as rebels against the ordered ritual of their lives, those who attempt Promethean manipulations of their world 36--that the dark ladies are found.

When other critics apply the archetypal method to Hardy's characters, they reveal why the more satisfactory protagonists seem to be colossal representatives of mankind rather than the highly individual personalities common in contemporary novels. Rolfe Scott-James calls Hardy "a peasant burdened with knowledge which magnified the problems, heightened the significance of the emotions, and enlarged the objects of perception till they seemed to be coexistent with all the world and the infinite," 37 and says that "the people and the countryside of what he called Wessex, seen through the prism of a romantic

35. Ibid., p. 21.

36. Ibid.

imagination, provided for Hardy the archetypal forms of human existence. ... Thus, Hardy's characters become elemental persons whose actions represent those of all men as they struggle against an uncaring world. The most successful protagonists, those who are capable of sustaining tragedy, are such colossal beings.

Professors Deen and Carpenter, who make specific analyses of Hardy's characters, compare them to the archetypal figures Tantalus and Job and to the scapegoat archetype, that of the sacrificial victim who must be destroyed or killed so that others may be strengthened. In Hardy tragedies those qualities which distinguish the dark ladies and the other rebels from the typical folk—"impulse, energy, elan"—are almost invariably punished, says Deen. The protagonists, those who differ from, are alien to, the passive changeless pastoral characters do not survive. As Deen explains, they end by giving up life and thus revealing the flaw of the universe. This the dark ladies do when they reach their dual culmination in Eustacia Vye and Tess Durbeyfield.

Deen concludes by saying that Hardy's novels "set the pattern for one

38. Ibid., p. 13.


40. Carpenter, p. 35.

41. Deen, p. 218.

42. Ibid., p. 219.
of the dominant traditions of the modern novel, the tradition which places a sympathetic, sensitive individual in a world hostile to him.

The generalized protagonist who embodies man in rebellion against his world does not, of course, lend himself to subtle psychological delineation. Thomas Hardy did not want such delineations; he was not a deliberate psychologist. As Walter Allen says, "individuality, as such, is not what he is after; what concerns him most is human beings in their response to the deep-rooted passions, above all sexual love." This is correct, for almost every novel and short story that Hardy wrote was primarily a love story; and furthermore, Hardy was long concerned with the pleasures, miseries, and psychological implications of the marriage relationship. As a result, most psychological studies of Hardy's fiction are discussions of the characters' sexual desires and experiences.

However, although most critics agree that the sex life of Hardy's characters is basic to the action of his fiction, Hardy was unable to deal openly with the characters' sex life and desires because he wrote for a Victorian audience. This presents a problem, for if Hardy does not reveal the sexual motives of his characters, how can a critic know that they exist? The text of Hardy's novels and short

43. Ibid.

stories provides sufficient evidence to justify the assumption that sex is one of the main motivating forces in his fiction. The short stories and less commonly read novels contain innumerable illicit meetings, clandestine marriages, secret pregnancies, and illegitimate children. Their frequency together with the fact that they are usually basic to the plots—the stories and novels have no plots without them—reveals that sex is the foundation of most Hardy plots. Furthermore, attempting to determine the characters' sexual desires enables one to understand them and the novels better. Finally, as Carpenter and other critics point out, Hardy's inability to discuss sex openly led him to reveal it symbolically; whether this symbolism is conscious or unconscious makes no difference in its effect on the readers. Such symbolism, fiery and phallic images, surrounds the dark ladies.

However, even when the necessity of analyzing the characters' sexual motives is recognized, a serious problem remains. The exact nature of their sex life, overt and covert, can be deduced only from scanty and sometimes ambiguous evidence. This is particularly bothersome in analyzing the dark ladies and is undoubtedly one reason they have not been fully understood or appreciated. Carpenter cites three examples of the problem: the reader never knows whether Tess was raped or seduced; he never knows Eustacia's exact relationship with Wildeve; he can only guess that Felice is pregnant when she whispers a
shocking secret to Grace. Each example concerns a dark lady.

Thus modern criticism opens the way for a discussion of Hardy's dark ladies, who are both grand, archetypal figures and sexually motivated women.

Furthermore, critics old and new have been quick to notice groups of character types in Hardy's fiction. While Hardy was still alive, Virginia Woolf pointed out that his women are similar to each other but different from the men, because the women are weaker and more fleshly, and because they suffer not the conflicts with fate which men experience, but conflicts with other characters. A recent study, one which extends Miss Woolf's, is the elaborate analysis of relationships between Hardy's women made by Albert Guerard. He begins his article by distinguishing between male and female characters much as Woolf does, describing Hardy's emphasis on "woman's impulse to seize the day against man's stubborn idealism," and continuing as follows:

... from this first radical difference all others may be said to follow: woman's 'impulsive inconsequence,' her vanity, her fickleness, her indifference to justice, and her inability to make an unsexed judgment, even her stoical endurance and her curious masochistic impulses. She who lives in an eternal present lives not the life of reason.

45. Carpenter, p. 28.


The distinction between men and women is generally valid, but closer analysis of the female characters reveals that they differ sharply from each other, more in fact than they do from some of the men. Guerard recognizes this and shows the differences between the various female characters and the change in Hardy's attitude toward women. Heroines of the early novels are unmoral and charming, says Guerard, and the early novels present "a rationale, very nearly, of feminine evasion and fickleness, although Far From the Madding Crowd and later novels show a more comprehensive view of women." 48 Elfride Swancourt is "a minor Eustacia Vye, full of unused feminine energies;" but her characterization is incomplete because the origin of Hardy's sympathy for her seems to exist somewhere outside the book. 49 Guerard does not search for the source of the sympathy, but it is interesting to note that Hardy's courtship of both Tryphena and Emma coincides with the writing of A Pair of Blue Eyes. Whatever its source, however, sympathy for the heroine does exist, and it is vital, for as Guerard says, "Sympathy--something more, that is, than the cool observation of women as fascinating objects--would be necessary to the later and universally praised portraits of Eustacia Vye and Tess Durbeyfield." 50

---

48. Ibid., p. 131.
49. Ibid., p. 135.
50. Ibid., p. 137.
Elfride is not really a dark lady. Although in some ways she becomes a tragic woman before the novel ends, she begins as a typical and rather inconsequential country girl, and the change in her personality is not made plausible in the novel. True sympathy and the full development of a tragic heroine do not occur until Hardy understands and sympathizes with the dark lady; for although he creates believable characters in the fairer, fickle women of his early novels, he neither fully understands nor deeply sympathizes with them. Guerard summarizes Hardy's development as a character-maker by saying that it progresses "from an assumption that all young women are unpredictable in the same amusing way to an understanding that women may differ one from the other as much as men do and may even be as purposeful and idealistic as they."51

This is true of the dark ladies who are often characterized as masculine. They share man's conflict with fate, facing the grand problems of existence, unlike the fairer women, who encounter their main difficulties in relationships with other characters. A distinction between dark and light characters is more valid and fruitful than is a distinction between male and female characters, particularly when one is studying the whole of Hardy's fiction and not just the early work. Guerard recognizes that some Hardy women achieve the nobility and strength

51. Ibid., p. 143.
of character which the author earlier reserved for his men. Those who
do this most completely are the two most successful dark ladies:
Eustacia Vye and Tess Durbeyfield.

The published criticism, then, neither affirms nor denies a
coherent concept of the dark lady in Hardy's fiction; but it does leave
the way open for my attempt to show that certain characters form such
a coherent group, essential to the fiction, and that from such characters
Hardy develops his great tragic heroines, Eustacia and Tess.

D. H. Lawrence's essay, "Hardy's 'Prédilection d'artiste,'"
comes closer to making the distinction which I see between dark and
light characters than does any other discussion of Hardy. Lawrence
discusses Hardy's aliens or, as he calls them, aristocrats, both male
and female: Cytherea Aldclyffe, Aetnus Manston, Elfride Swancourt
and the lord she marries, Troy, Farmer Boldwood, Eustacia and
Wildeve, de Stancy, Viviette Constantine, Michael Henchard and
Lucetta, Felice Charmond and Eldred Fitzpiers, Tess and Alec
D'Urberville, and Jude Fawley. Hardy admired these characters
and was drawn to them, Lawrence says, because as an aristocrat each
is a character who "can afford to be, to be himself, to create himself,
to live as himself. That is his eternal fascination. . . . The glory of
mankind is not in a host of secure, comfortable, law-abiding citizens,

52. D. H. Lawrence, "Hardy's 'Prédilection d'artiste,'" Hardy:
but in the few more fine, clear lives, beings, individuals, distinct, detached, single. . . ."53

Lawrence shows how Hardy's attitude toward these characters changes. At first Hardy makes each one who is unusual a villain; "all exceptional or strong traits he holds up as weaknesses or wicked faults." However, he moves steadily away from this position, and each new aristocrat becomes "less villainous and more human. The first show of real sympathy, nearly conquering the bourgeois or commune morality, is for Eustacia." Hardy's attitude continues to change, Lawrence says, until he is able to create Jude who is both "the old Virgin Knight and the Dark Villain:"

The condemnation gradually shifts over from the dark villain to the blond bourgeois virgin hero, from Alec d'Urberville to Angel Clare, till in Jude they are united and loved, though the preponderance is of a dark villain, now dark, beloved, passionate hero. The condemnation shifts over at last from the dark villain to the white virgin, the bourgeois in soul: from Arabella to Sue. Infinitely more subtle and sad is the condemnation at the end, but there it is: the virgin knight is hated with intensity, yet still loved; the white virgin, the beloved, is the arch-sinner against life at last, and the last note of hatred is against her.54

This analysis of Hardy's characters reveals much of what happens to the dark ladies in the course of his career. The dark, sexual female characters, at first seen as unnatural people outside the

53. Ibid., p. 47.

54. Ibid., p. 48.
society of the natural, pastoral characters become sympathetic heroines who are seen as natural, while the pastoral, social characters become a rigidly cruel and inhumane group. This metamorphosis takes place sooner in the female characters than in the male, however. From his first published novel, Desperate Remedies, Hardy sympathizes with and admires the dark ladies, although he regards them as evil or at least sinister in his early fiction. And even though the aristocrats have Hardy's sympathy late in his career as a fiction writer, they "must every one die, every single one." The cause, Lawrence says, is twofold: "the germ of death" exists in these characters and "the artist himself has a bourgeois taint, a jealous vindictiveness" that takes revenge on the aristocrat. 55

Lawrence's analysis of Hardy's development as a character-maker is, in my opinion, essentially correct. He points out that each aristocratic character is passionate and that failure is inherent in each of them. He describes the aristocratic women as follows: Elfride, Viviette Constantine, Marty South and Tess are passionate aristocrats "doomed by their very being to tragedy, or to misfortune in the end." Cytherea Aldclyffe, Eustacia, Lucetta, and Felice are passionate aristocrats who fall "before the weight of the average, the lawful crowd, but who, in more primitive times, would have formed romantic

55. Ibid., p. 47.
rather than tragic figures. " These aristocratic women Lawrence con-
trasts to the average successful woman, Cytherea Graye, Bathsheba,
Thomasin, Paula, Elizabeth-Jane, Grace, Sue. 56 The contrast is
between dark and light, rebel and assenter.

The meaning of the novels, Lawrence, concludes, is that the
physical and spiritual individualist, "a man of distinct being, who must
act in his own particular way to fulfill his own individual nature," is a
being which has to fail "because of its own isolation, because it is a
sport, not in the true line of life." Tess, Jude, and Viviette he gives
as examples. 57 I would add Eustacia.

The biographical and critical studies examined above provide
a favorable background for my thesis by establishing four important
points. Biographers have shown that Hardy bases a great many of his
plots and characters on his personal experience and acquaintances and
that he knew two distinctly different women intimately. Critics have
pointed out again and again that there are two vastly different kinds of
women in Hardy's fiction: Guerard differentiates between those who
are rather commonplace and mundane and those unusual, grand, and
heroic. Lawrence distinguishes between the dull, law-abiding,
communal characters and those aristocrats who are isolated, living

56. Ibid., p. 49.
57. Ibid.
"fine, clear lives." Finally, critics generally recognize that in the course of his career Hardy's attitude changed from sympathy for the typical character to sympathy for the atypical. Each of these points lends support to my belief that the dark ladies, probably modeled on Tryphena Sparks, are a single coherent group of characters whom Hardy first distrusts and finally finds such deep sympathy for that they become his heroines, those who can rebel for all mankind against the unfeeling, inhumane, ironic universe.
THE DARK LADY IN MINOR ROLES

The dark lady plays a central role in Hardy's first published novel, Desperate Remedies. The lady, Miss Aldclyffe, acts in opposition to the main character, the fair and somewhat silly Cytherea Graye; and it is her strong love for Cytherea's father which prompts her to seek the match between her illegitimate son and Cytherea. This desire is the source of the action of this melodramatic novel.

The dark lady makes her first appearance as she stands before crimson curtains emblazoned by the afternoon sun:

The stranger appeared like a tall black figure standing in the midst of fire. It was the figure of a finely-built woman, of spare though not angular proportions.

She was not a very young woman, but could boast of much beauty of the majestic autumnal phase.

She appeared now no more than five-and-thirty, though she might easily have been ten or a dozen years older. She had clear steady eyes, a Roman nose in its purest form, and also the round prominent chin with which the Caesars are presented in ancient marbles; a mouth expressing a capability for and tendency to strong emotion, habitually controlled by pride. There was a severity about the lower outlines of the face which gave a masculine cast to this portion of her countenance. Womanly weakness was nowhere visible save in one part—the curve of her forehead and brows; there it was clear and emphatic. 1

Although she is a middle-aged woman, Miss Aldclyffe's features, figure, coloring, and the aura of weary sophistication about her are those of every dark lady. In this, his first published novel, Hardy describes the dark lady fully: a tall black figure amid fire; finely-built, majestically beautiful with clear, steady eyes and a classic nose and chin; an emotional and proud woman with a certain masculine look and almost none of the weakness typical of other Hardy women. She is one of the most interesting characters in this first novel, and even after one has read most of Hardy's fiction, she remains a memorable figure.

The central action of *Desperate Remedies* concerns characters of the generation after that of Cytherea Aldclyffe, but the novel opens at the time of her youth. Rather quickly and sketchily, Hardy tells of a country boy, Ambrose Graye, who goes to London where he meets the Bradleigh family and their daughter Cytherea. (Later, when they inherit a fortune, they change their name to Aldclyffe.) The Bradleighs' social position is above Graye's, for Mr. Bradleigh is a retired naval officer and his wife's genealogy is excellent. Miss Aldclyffe is socially distinct from the more pastoral Graye and the children he will have.

Ambrose Graye falls in love with Cytherea Aldclyffe, but although she seems to love him, she becomes quite upset when he suggests that they marry. Eventually she sends him a letter in which she hints that there is a mysterious secret in her past and tells him good-bye.
forever. Graye accepts her refusal sadly, returns home, and later marries a woman he does not love. They have two children, a daughter whom Graye names Cytherea, and a son.

At this point in the narrative, Hardy skips over several years, then resumes the tale to describe the death of Ambrose Graye and begins the main action of the novel, the story of his children. They move from their home, and Cytherea Graye is hired as a companion to Miss Aldclyffe, who has become the wealthy middle-aged woman of the description quoted above. Miss Aldclyffe soon discovers that young Cytherea is the daughter of Ambrose Graye and becomes obsessed with the idea that Cytherea must marry Manston, Miss Aldclyffe's illegitimate son whose existence prevented her own marriage to Ambrose. This desire is the basic motive for all that Miss Aldclyffe does in the novel.

In his discussion of Desperate Remedies, Albert Guerard says that the first five chapters of the novel have no "animating impulse" at work in them and that "the book recovers energy in the sixth chapter with the appearance of a highly abnormal woman, the older Miss Aldclyffe; the next few chapters are animated by Hardy's curiosity concerning her motives and those of Aenaes Manston, a Byronic if not diabolic villain." Later Guerard is more detailed:

Hardy's first impression of her, colored no doubt by his reading of fiction, is distinctly unpleasant. But Miss Aldclyffe also

has her 'sweet dream,' as we learn at the very end. . . . Hardy's conscious intuitive understanding of Miss Aldclyffe . . . reduces itself to two propositions, which are melodramatic rather than implausible: (1) a woman may be inexplicably attracted to a girl because she is the daughter of a former lover; (2) she may want to reenact her own unsuccessful romance, but successfully, by marrying her son to the daughter. 3

The source of the novel's plot, then, is Miss Aldclyffe's attempt to recreate her passionate love and is certainly not the rather insipid love of Cytherea and Springrove. The sexual overtones in the character of Miss Aldclyffe are strong and somewhat perverse. The scene in which she climbs into bed with the young Cytherea and caresses her has been pounced upon by modern critics, but Guerard's contention that this scene's Lesbian overtones were unconscious intuition on Hardy's part seems more likely than any hint that they were deliberate. Nevertheless, Guerard states that "the 'unpleasantness' which Hardy dramatizes is unmistakably that of Lesbian attachment," 4 and its effect is that of abnormal sensuality.

The critic Lawrence Jones, describing Miss Aldclyffe as more than merely a stereotyped character, says that "the marriage of her illegitimate son to Graye's daughter becomes . . . her means of symbolically satisfying her love. She is not a simple evildoer, but is to some extent a victim of her own passions and the social

3. Ibid., pp. 103-4.

4. Ibid., p. 104.
Passionate love motivates her and causes her to act the role of villainess. This could well be said of all the dark ladies who are seen as evil.

Miss Aldclyffe is unsuccessful in her attempt to recreate her love in Cytherea and Manston, and she dies as all dark ladies must. Hardy says of her, "Miss Aldclyffe in the jaws of death was Miss Aldclyffe still, though the old fire had degenerated to mere phosphorescence now."6

Thus, in this the first fiction published by Hardy, the dark lady appears and though not a major character, is the central motivating force of the novel. If she did not exist, there would be no plot. Miss Aldclyffe is a dark lady: she is physically tall, dark, statuesque, and beautiful; she is associated with images of fire; she is from the city, is of noble lineage, and is wealthy; she is desperately in love and is motivated by this love; she is not a virgin; she is sad and tragic; she is considered weird and unusual by Cytherea and the other more commonplace characters; she is an overpowering personality; she dies without fulfilling her desires and Hardy says that her "weak act of trying to live seemed a silent wrestling with all the powers of the universe."7


6. Thomas Hardy, Desperate Remedies, p. 443.

7. Ibid., p. 440.
Already the dark lady has the potentiality of becoming a heroically tragic figure.

Miss Aldclyffe is the most interesting of the minor dark ladies, but there are numerous others, including Xanthippe Barnet and Helena Hall who are quite typical, Lucetta Farfrae and Felice Charmond who are unusual dark ladies, and Rhoda Brook, the heroine of "The Withered Arm," whose characterization strongly foreshadows that of Tess Durbeyfield.

Xanthippe Barnet, a "tall, commanding lady," does not often appear in the story, but her existence is central to the dramatic structure of "Fellow-Townsmen." As the troublesome and mysterious older wife of the protagonist, she is the dark character whose existence sets up a conflict with the fairer characters. She prevents her husband from finding happiness either in their marriage or in his love for the "fair young woman" with "a slight girlish shape," Lucy Savile. Barnet marries Xanthippe and brings her to live with him in a small town before the story opens. The tale of their miserable marriage and of his longing for Lucy Savile is told from Barnet's point of view, as is the typical method in the early fiction where Hardy views the dark lady


9. Ibid., p. 129.

10. Ibid., p. 125.
from the viewpoint of a more conventional character who dislikes her.

When Barnet believes that Xanthippe has drowned, however, he looks at her still features as she lies on the bed and sees her as the sexually attractive and mysterious figure which is the dark lady:

She was a woman some years older than himself, but had not by any means overpassed the maturity of good looks and vigour. Her passionate features, well-defined, firm, and statuesque in life, were doubly so now: her mouth and brow, beneath her purplish-black hair, showed only too clearly that the turbulency of character which had made a bear-garden of his house had been no temporary phase of her existence. 11

In the next sentence he decides that she may not be dead. His ministrations bring her back to consciousness and she lives to make his marriage miserable once more and to thwart his desire to have Lucy as his own. Even when Xanthippe dies, years later, her death comes too late to let him marry Lucy.

In "Interlopers at the Knap," Helena acts as the source of the short story's conflict and the cause of its unhappy ending. Helena, another dark lady, appears as a minor but essential character. The story opens as Farmer Darton rides to marry Sally Hall. Before he arrives for the ceremony, Sally's brother Phil, his wife Helena, and their two children arrive from Australia cold, hungry, and impoverished. Phil dies and it is soon revealed that Darton loved Helena years before but that she had refused his proposal of marriage to wed Phil who, she

11. Ibid., pp. 119-20.
tells Darton, had "the prior claim."\textsuperscript{12} This and other remarks she makes indicate that Helena was probably pregnant when she refused Darton's proposal and left England to join Phil in Australia. She refers to paying for her errors and says that her wealthy uncle disinherited her because she had disgraced herself.\textsuperscript{13} Hardy describes Helena as a majestic figure as she stands in the stable in Sally's wedding dress, "a pale, dark-eyed, ladylike creature, whose personality ruled her attirerather than was ruled by it."\textsuperscript{14}

Eventually Darton marries the widowed Helena instead of Sally, and she makes him miserable because "since the time he had originally known her--eight or ten years before--she had been severely tried. She had loved herself out, in short, and was now occasionally given to moping."\textsuperscript{15} Like the other dark ladies, Helena has loved passionately and like them she becomes weary and apathetic. After a few years of marriage, Helena dies.

The descriptions of Miss Aldclyffe, Xanthippe, and Helena, their striking names, their roles in the plots, their world-weary natures, their deaths, and the ambiguous way in which Hardy treats them all

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Thomas Hardy, "Interlopers at the Knap," The Short Stories \ldots, p. 172.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 167.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 171.
\end{itemize}
make each clearly a dark lady, though each is a secondary character.

Felice Charmond and Lucetta Farfrae are the characters critics cite most frequently as alien and unusual. Both are dark ladies, but they are extreme examples of the type. Each is an attractive, sensual woman whose origins are not rural: Lucetta is French; Felice is an aristocrat. Although he uses each as an antagonist, Hardy treats them with a degree of sympathy, as he does every dark lady. The two are, however, modern, hedonistic, eccentric figures who are essentially separate from the pastoral world in which Hardy places them—not typical dark ladies. The novels in which they appear present a central character, Michael Henchard and Grace Melbury, set between two forces which can be generally described as natural-pastoral and unnatural-modern. In both novels, Hardy uses the dark lady to represent the unnatural influence of modern society, exaggerating her to make the contrast between the two forces more emphatic. Both Lucetta and Felice are rather static characters who represent evil in a sort of morality play in which the protagonist is pulled in two directions—toward the forces of darkness and toward those of light. These dark ladies are not fully developed and they lack the reality other dark ladies have. They also lack their grandeur. Lucetta and Felice, who are primarily sexual figures, are motivated only by sex. Felice cries, "O! why were we given hungry hearts and wild desires if we have to
live in a world like this. "16 The two curse life as do all dark ladies, but their main complaint is sexual, for they lack the grandeur of rebels such as Eustacia and Tess.

The long tale, "The Withered Arm," published in 1888, is the story of another tall, dark-haired woman, Rhoda Brook. She too is a dark lady. Although Rhoda is a milkmaid born in the country, her early love for Dairymen Lodge, the birth of his son, and her passive acceptance of his rejection have alienated her from the other country folk before the story opens. Late in the tale, Rhoda recalls that "she had been slyly called a witch since her fall; but never having understood why that particular stigma had been attached to her, it had passed disregarded."17 However, Lodge's marriage to a young woman arouses Rhoda's curiosity, and she is eager to know what Hardy indicates are important facts about any woman: whether she is dark or fair, if she is as tall as Rhoda, and if her eyes are as dark as Rhoda's. Hardy compares the two women: "There was more of the strength that endures in her [Rhoda's] well-defined features and large frame than in the soft-cheeked young woman before her."18

18. Ibid., p. 52.
When young Mrs. Lodge's arm becomes disfigured, the country-folk and eventually Rhoda and Mrs. Lodge too, believe that Rhoda's malign influence causes it. Rhoda and her son move away and when, years later, Mrs. Lodge goes to touch the neck of a hanged man hoping to cure her arm, she is confronted by Rhoda and Dairyman Lodge who have come to claim the body of the criminal, their son.

Rhoda is a dairymaid as Tess was to be. She is also a dark lady whose youthful affair produced a child and whose aloofness alienates her from the other characters. Like all dark ladies, she is motivated by love, she is tired of life, and she is doomed. Unlike all but Tess, she is the possessor of her story, and unlike all other dark ladies, she does not die in the story but lives on alone and isolated. She works until her form becomes bent and "her once abundant dark hair white and worn away." Even though her death is not portrayed in the story, her life is clearly ended when the tale closes. This is Hardy's first fully sympathetic treatment of the dark lady.

19. Ibid., p. 78.
THE DARK LADY IN MAJOR ROLES

Three dark ladies, Eustacia Vye, Vivette Constantine, and Tess Durbeyfield, play major roles in the fiction. Although it may at first seem curious to group these three women together, a careful analysis of them will reveal that they are each developed from a single character type. They look alike, their personalities are alike, and each is distrusted by and alienated from the other characters. Furthermore, as the next chapter will show, they play similar dramatic and symbolic roles in their novels. And as Hardy's attitude toward them changes from distrust to ambiguity and finally to complete sympathy, they change from villainesses to heroines.

Eustacia Vye

Like Miss Aldclyffe, Eustacia Vye is first seen as a solitary figure before a fiery background. Hardy creates an aura of mystery and attraction about her by revealing her slowly to the reader. At first he says simply: "That she was tall and straight in build, that she was ladylike in her movements, was all that could be learned of her just now. . . ."¹ Later, he describes her classic profile and then in the

famous "Queen of Night" chapter devotes himself to a thorough description of her, beginning: "Eustacia Vye was the raw material of a divinity" (Return, p. 73).

The passage below, quoted from this chapter, is Hardy's fullest and most direct description of the dark lady:

She was in person full-limbed and somewhat heavy; without ruddiness, as without pallor; and so soft to the touch as a cloud. To see her hair was to fancy that a whole winter did not contain darkness enough to form its shadow; it closed over her forehead like nightfall extinguishing the western glow.

Her nerves extended into those tresses, and her temper could always be softened by stroking them down. When her hair was brushed down she would instantly sink into stillness and look like the Sphinx (Return, pp. 73-4).

He reveals her passionate personality through his description of her sensual beauty and animal-like response to physical touch, and by associating her with phallic and fiery images. She carries the spyglass throughout the novel, often stands beside fires, and is said to be a fiery person:

She had Pagan eyes, full of nocturnal mysteries. Their light, as it came and went, and came again, was partially hampered by their oppressive lids and lashes; and of these the under lid was much fuller than it is usually with English women. . . . Assuming that the souls of men and women were visible essences, you could fancy the color of Eustacia's soul to be flame-like. The sparks from it that rose into her dark pupils gave that same impression (Return, p. 74).

Fiery images reveal that hers is a passionate personality, but this is not their sole meaning, for they also reflect Eustacia's Promethean
rebelliousness. She and the other dark ladies cannot be characterized simply in terms of their sexual desires, for they are complex personalities whose presence in the novels has more than sensual significance. However, in this chapter I shall discuss their sexual nature at some length because it is the basis of their characterization.

In this, his most direct characterization of the dark lady, Hardy reveals her sexual experience rather clearly. The spyglass, the well rope, and many of the dances Eustacia takes part in all symbolize her sensuality, as critics have pointed out. Furthermore, although Hardy never says that she has had an affair with Wildeve, he hints that this is the case. The passages below, quoted from the first interview between Wildeve and Eustacia, show Hardy's method:

"I have loved you, and have shown you that I loved you, much to my regret" \(\textit{Eustacia}\) (\textit{Return}, p. 93).

"Eustacia, how we roved among these bushes last year, when the hot days had got cool, and the shades of the hills kept us almost invisible in the hollows!" \(\textit{Return}\), p. 95)

In an earlier version, Hardy was even more direct, for he had Eustacia say that she had been Wildeve's "body and soul." 


Hardy tells the reader directly that Eustacia's is a passionate
and troubled personality which cannot find lasting fulfillment—and that
she recognizes this fact:

To be loved to madness—such was her great desire. Love was to her the one cordial which could drive away the
eating loneliness of her days. And she seemed to long for
the abstraction called passionate love more than for any
particular lover.

She could show a most reproachful look at times, but
it was directed less against human beings than against cer-
tain creatures of her mind, the chief of these being Destiny, through whose interference she dimly fancied it arose that
love alighted only on gliding youth—-that any love she might
win would sink simultaneously with the sand in the glass. She thought of it with an ever-growing consciousness of
cruelty, which tended to breed actions of the reckless
unconventionality, framed to snatch a year's, a week's, even
an hour's passion from anywhere while it could be won.
Through want of it she had sung without being merry, pos-
sessed without enjoying, outshone without triumphing. Her
loneliness deepened her desire. On Egdon, coldest and
meanest kisses were at famine prices; and where was a
mouth matching hers to be found?

Fidelity in love for fidelity's sake had less attraction for
her than for most women: fidelity because of love's grip had
much. A blaze /italics mine/of love, and extinction, was
better than a lantern glimmer of the same which should last
long years. On this head she knew by prevision what most
women learn only by experience: she had mentally walked
round love, told the towers thereof, considered its palaces;
and concluded that love was but a doleful joy. Yet she desired
it, as one in a desert would be thankful for brackish water
(Return, p. 78).

This description of Eustacia shows her motivated by sexual impulses,
and shows that these impulses only form the base upon which her com-
plex personality is built.
Eustacia is a dark lady in other ways. She is proud. She is given some of the characteristics which Miss Woolf says Hardy reserves for men. She is an idealist whose quarrel is with Fate, not with the people around her. In the action of the novel, she takes an aggressive role. It is she, not Clym, who initiates their courtship by attending the Christmas party at his home. Hardy mentions her masculinity in the "Queen of Night" chapter: "She seldom schemed, but when she did scheme, her plans showed rather the comprehensive strategy of a general than the small arts called womanish" (Return, p. 80).

Eustacia, like all dark ladies, is alienated from the country folk near whom she lives both because she feels herself to be different from them and because they distrust and fear her. Eustacia—the city-bred, well educated girl whose father was a foreign musician and whose mother was related to a peer—hates Egdon where she feels "like one banished" (Return, p. 76) and is utterly alone. Wildeve, her only acquaintance, is no fit companion for her and she knows it. The other inhabitants of the heath see her as weird and evil: Susan Nunsuch believes she is a witch; Christian Cantle refers to her as "a witch" (Return, p. 200); and even Mrs. Yeobright dislikes her and says, "Good girls don't get treated as witches" (Return, p. 203). Hardy at first shared their opinion, as chapter six will show.

This, then, is Eustacia Vye, the first of the fully developed dark ladies: majestic, sensually beautiful, languorous, alone, and
passionate. Hardy closes his "Queen of Night" chapter and opens the plot by saying:

And so we see our Eustacia--for at times she was not altogether unloveable--arriving at that stage of enlightenment which feels that nothing is worth while, and filling up the spare hours of her existence by idealizing Wildeve for want of a better object. This was the sole reason of his ascendancy: she knew it herself. At moments her pride rebelled against her passion for him, and she even had longed to be free. But there was only one circumstance which could dislodge him, and that was the advent of a greater man (Return, p. 80).

Viviette Constantine

Viviette Constantine, the heroine of Two on a Tower, an unsuccessful but very interesting novel, is another dark lady. She, like Eustacia, is associated with fiery and phallic images, is sensually beautiful, passionate, and sexually experienced; she plays a masculine role in her courtship; and she is alienated from the other characters in the novel. Hardy's description of her as she observes Swithin could easily be that of Eustacia, Tess, or any of the other dark ladies:

Her hair was black as midnight, her eyes had no less deep a shade, and her complexion showed the richness demanded as a support to these decided features. As she continued to look at the pretty fellow before her, . . . a warmer wave of her warm temperament glowed visibly through her, and a qualified observer might from this have hazarded a guess that there was Romance blood in her veins. 5

She is a married woman whose husband has been away for several years

and who, until she sees the fair Swithin, is bored and lonely. Hardy says that her desire to see the memorial tower on her property, which is clearly a phallic symbol, was prompted by "the sheer desire for something to do--the chronic desire of her curiously lonely life," and that "she was in a mood to welcome anything that would in some measure disperse an almost killing ennui. She would have welcomed even a misfortune" (Tower, p. 3). She shares with Eustacia the desire for some intense experience to end her boredom, even if that experience must have tragic consequences. Hardy makes it clear that this desire is at least partly sexual when he describes her immediate attraction to the blond and "pretty" Swithin St.-Cleve.

In their love affair she is the aggressor, like all the major dark ladies. She recognizes that each advance she makes endangers Swithin, yet she cannot resist pursuing her love until, eventually, he realizes how she feels and immediately--unconvincingly--falls passionately in love with her. Indeed, at times Hardy's descriptions make Viviette seem to be preying on the innocent Swithin, as she does when Hardy describes her thoughts just after meeting the boy:

A more attractive feature in the case was that the same youth, so capable of being ruined by flattery, blandishment, pleasure, even a gross prosperity, should be at present living on in a primitive Eden of unconsciousness, with aims towards whose accomplishment a Caliban shape would have been as effective as his own (Tower, p. 12).
Viviette is a wealthy aristocrat, the wife of a lord, and her life is passed in the manor house, separate from the country folk. She is aware of her social position and obligations and so remains psychologically as well as physically separated from the other characters. The country folk look upon her as peculiar and weird, as they do all dark ladies. Tabitha Lark, a typical country girl, cannot understand Lady Constantine's listlessness, and a member of the rural chorus says of her: "Nobody can be answerable for the wishes of that unnatural tribe of mankind. Not but that woman's heart-strings is tied in many aggravating ways" (Tower, p. 18). She, too, is distrusted and feared.

In the description of her just before the action of the plot commences, Hardy shows Viviette as the typical dark lady, alone, attractive, passionate, and doomed:

She wore a heavy dress of velvet and lace, and being the only person in the spacious apartment she looked small and isolated. The soft dark eyes which she raised to him as he entered—large, and melancholy by circumstance far more than by quality—were the natural indices of a warm and affectionate, perhaps slightly voluptuous temperament, languishing for want of something to do, cherish, or suffer for (Tower, p. 24).

**Tess Durbeyfield**

Both Eustacia and Viviette are described as dark ladies. Tess is described in the same way; however, the technique of her characterization differs from that of the other dark ladies who are each fully developed, mature characters when they first appear in the
novels. Tess Durbeyfield's character and appearance change in the course of her novel. She is at first a lovely, innocent maiden, but she becomes a true dark lady, both physically and psychologically, after her sexual experience with Alec D'Urberville.

Hardy's initial description of her emphasizes the fact that she is typical:

A small minority, mainly strangers, would look long at her in casually passing by, and grow momentarily fascinated by her freshness, and wonder if they would ever see her again; but to almost everybody she was a fine and picturesque country girl, and no more.  

However, even in the beginning she is somewhat unusual. She is disturbed by the life her parents lead, and critical of it; her father says of her, "Tess is queer" (Tess, p. 37). In other words, she cannot be counted upon to act as other young girls do. Early in the novel she has a certain physical maturity, "a luxuriance of aspect, a fulness of growth, which made her appear more of a woman than she really was" (Tess, p. 52) and distinguishes her from other girls. Alec D'Urberville is the first to notice this quality; the first time he sees her he calls her "my big beauty" (Tess, p. 50), echoing the earlier descriptions of dark women and foreshadowing later descriptions of Tess herself as a dark lady.

---

Hardy tells the reader that Tess's experience with Alec changes her. When she is returning home from Trantridge, the sunrise forms a "yellow luminosity behind her back" (Tess, p. 89), perhaps echoing earlier fiery images, and as she looks toward her home, Hardy says:

"Since her eyes last fell upon it she had learned that the serpent hisses where sweet birds sing, and her views of life had been totally changed for her by the lesson. Verily another girl than the simple one she had been at home was she who, bowed by thought, stood still here, and turned to look behind her" (Tess, p. 90).

Hardy's next description of Tess, as she works in the field after the birth of her child, reveals the physical change. It is interesting to note that he uses the same technique he did earlier with Eustacia and Viviette, of revealing her full beauty slowly:

This morning the eye turns involuntarily to the girl in the pink cotton jacket, she being the most flexuous and finely drawn figure of them all. But her bonnet is pulled so far over her brow that none of her face is disclosed while she binds, though her complexion may be guessed from a stray twine or two of dark-brown hair which extends below the curtain of her bonnet.

At intervals she stands up to rest, and to re-tie her disarranged apron, or to pull her bonnet straight. Then one can see the oval face of a handsome young woman, with deep, dark eyes, and long, heavy, clinging tresses which seem to clasp in a beseeching way anything they fall against. The cheeks are paler, the teeth more regular, the red lips thinner than is usual in a country-bred girl.

It is Tess Durbeyfield, otherwise D'Urberville, somewhat changed--the same, but not the same; at the present stage of her existence living as a stranger and an alien here, though it was no strange land that she was in (Tess, pp. 104-5).
Her looks have so changed that now the eye is drawn to her when before few would pay her special attention. Furthermore, she who was once a happy rural maiden now feels herself an alien in her own valley. She experiences the same isolation which Eustacia, Viviette, and all the dark ladies feel. Tess is alone, whether for real or imaginary reasons: "Walking among the sleeping birds in the hedges, watching the skipping rabbits on a moonlit warren, or standing under a pheasant-laden bough, she looked upon herself as a figure of Guilt intruding into the haunts of Innocence" (Tess, p. 101). She feels that she is an outsider, just as the other dark ladies do. And indeed, her genteel ancestry makes her somewhat different from those around her even if her deed does not. In a descriptive passage, Hardy says that Tess is "an almost typical woman," but that something in her character prevents her from being completely typical, from being in complete accord with her environment:

It was a thousand pities, indeed; it was impossible for even an enemy to feel otherwise on looking at Tess as she sat there, with her flower-like mouth and large, tender eyes, neither black nor blue nor gray nor violet; rather all those shades together, and a hundred others, which could be seen if one looked into their irises—shade behind shade—tint beyond tint—round depths that had no bottom, an almost typical woman, but for the slight incautiousness of character inherited from her race (Tess, pp. 106-7).

The experience with Alec changes Tess to a dark lady by altering her physical appearance, making her aware of sex—"she had learned that the serpent hisses where sweet birds sing", by ending her virginity,
and by alienating her from the community of characters. Like all the
major dark ladies, Tess is proud and somewhat masculine. It is pride
which prevents her from responding to Alec's declaration of love and
perhaps saving herself from the ordeal of bearing a child out of wedlock.
When he asks her if she can ever love him, she replies, 'Perhaps, of
all things, a lie on this thing would do the most good to me now; but I
have enough honor left, little as 'tis, not to tell that lie. If I did love
you I may have the best o' causes for letting you know it. But I don't'" (Tess, p. 93). Tess also shares masculine characteristics with the
other dark ladies: she too feels that destiny is her enemy, not the
people around her, and she, as all major dark ladies, acts the some-
what unnatural role of aggressor in a courtship with a blond man. She
comes to Clare: he is living at the dairy and she comes there; he is in
the overgrown garden and she approaches him:

She went stealthily as a cat through this profusion of growth,
gathering cuckoo-spittle on her skirts, brushing off snails
that were climbing the apple-tree stems, staining her hands
with thistle-milk and slug-slime, and rubbing off upon her
naked arms sticky blights that, though snow-white on the
tree-trunks, made blood-red stains on her skin; thus she
drew quite near to Clare, though still unobserved of him
(Tess, p. 143).

The death of her child completes Tess's transition from
country girl to dark lady, for it makes her a majestic figure and gives
her the sense of tragedy that the other dark ladies share. Her brothers
and sisters recognize the change as they watch her baptize the dead
child: "She did not look like Sissy to them now, but as a being large, towering, and awful--a divine personage with whom they had nothing in common" (Tess, p. 112).

Tess's languor differs somewhat from that of Eustacia and Viviette, for it is not overtly sexual. However, as Tess rallies and leaves the valley again, she has resigned herself to a passive, rather dull existence: "There should be no more D'Urberville air-castles in the dreams and deeds of her new life. She would be dairymaid Tess, and nothing more" (Tess, p. 117). She is indifferent, even somewhat listless, and her mood, though less obviously than those of Eustacia and Viviette, is one which will be easily stirred to passion.

Thus, when the second section of the novel ends, Tess is a dark lady, a distinctly beautiful and tragic figure:

Almost 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 experiences of the last year or two had quite failed to demoralize (Tess, p. 116).

It is as such that Tess leaves her home for the second time. The story of her real love does not begin until she has become a dark lady.
THE MAJOR DARK LADIES IN THEIR NOVELS

In the dichotomy which characterizes Hardy plots—a dichotomy basic to the three novels under discussion here and to almost all of his fiction—the dark lady is the female embodiment of those who revolt against the accepted order of things and who consider themselves banished in an unhappy, unsympathetic world.

Although critics have not agreed on interpreting the antitheses upon which Hardy bases his plots and characterizations, they have been quick to point them out, as Chapter Two indicated. Older critics describe them in terms such as traditional and modern, pastoral and urban, innocent and sophisticated, and good and evil. More modern critics are less quick to label the antitheses, but they, too, recognize their importance. Davidson says that some of Hardy's characters, those he describes as modern in conception, attempt Promethean manipulations of their world in rebellion against the ordered ritual of their lives. Lawrence calls these characters aristocrats, and says that each one is a character "of distinct being, who must act in his own particular way to fulfill his own individual nature." Deen says

1. Davidson, p. 21.
2. Lawrence, p. 49.
that some of Hardy's characters are typical of those common to twentieth-century fiction, individuals isolated in an alien world.

Whatever their symbolic meaning, the antitheses are clearly drawn and are central to Hardy's fiction. In most plots, as has been said in previous chapters of this paper, he uses two distinct types of characters to represent antithetical modes of human existence, those who assent and accommodate themselves to life with its injustice and misery, and those who dissent, feel out of place in the world, and rebel against the natural order of things. Conflicts between the assenters, usually pastoral, light, spiritual characters, and dissenters, usually sophisticated, dark, sensuous, provide the basis for many of Hardy's plots.

The dark lady is, of course, central to the antithetical forces which Hardy plays against each other in his plots. In each of the three novels having the dark lady as its main character, she is in love with a member of the antithetical order of characters, and in each of these novels the opposite modes of human existence which each personifies are brought into sharp contrast. The basic difference between the lovers accounts for the action of the plots.

Each novel tells a different story, but the causes for the events are in each case the same. The dark lady is at odds with her environment

and will not change herself in order to survive; her lighter, more conventional lover may not find the universe just, but he is willing to adapt himself to it. This is true of Eustacia and Clym, of Viviette and Swithin, and of Tess and Angel. In each case their marriage represents the wedding of two antithetical forces and like the other characters, the light man cannot comprehend his dark wife. This is what dooms each couple.

The differences between the lovers result in parallel situations, events, and motifs in each of the three novels. Both characters feel that nature is unsympathetic to them, but the man is willing to temper himself to its demands, can even find contentment in doing so, while his darker partner is unwilling to change, determined to act according to her own nature. These characteristics are manifested in the plots in two principal ways. First, each man is less sensual than his wife, less a visionary rebel, and more practical. He can ignore his sensual desire or channel it into intellectual development, but she refuses either to sublimate or to ignore hers. Hardy tells the reader that each woman is essentially passionate, as the last chapter pointed out. He also tells the reader that the men are less passionate than their wives, less than wholly devoted; Clym, Swithin, and Angel all have interests outside their love. Clym is the least criticized of the three, but he accuses himself of killing Eustacia by speaking "cruel words to her," and by not inviting "her back till it was too late" (Return, p. 430). He
recognizes that his love is not as strong as Eustacia's. Neither is Swithin's, and Hardy tells the reader that he is not worthy of Viviette:

"In truth, he was not only too young in years, but too literal, direct, and uncompromising in nature to understand such a woman as Lady Constantine; and she suffered for that limitation in him. . . . " (Tower, p. 293). Hardy's comments on Angel Clare are more direct: "Some might risk the odd paradox that with more animalism he would have been the nobler man. We do not say it. Yet Clare's love was ethereal to a fault, imaginative to impracticability" (Tess, p. 276). Both the men and the women experience passionate love, but the men can find muted happiness in intellectual love, while the women's only happiness is love. The women are motivated by their love; all else is secondary. Eustacia tells Clym: "Don't mistake me, Clym. . . . I love you for yourself alone. . . . I would rather live with you in a hermitage here than not be yours at all!" (Return, p. 227). And Hardy says of Viviette, "To love St. Cleve so far better than herself as this was to surpass the love of women as conventionally understood, and mostly existing" (Tower, p. 258). Tess's devotion to Angel is broken only when he seems to have utterly forsaken her, and still she loves him. At the end of the novel Angel realizes that "the strength of her affection for himself . . . had apparently extinguished her moral sense altogether" (Tess, p. 443). The dark lady's love never ends. It is only when the man's love weakens that tragedy occurs and the woman dies.
The lovers' antithetical natures are shown in a second way: each man is willing to submerge his individuality, and each woman has a strong sense of her importance as a single being. This sense of personal importance is manifested in the plots in three ways: each dark lady is separated from the other characters both by her own choice and by their reactions to her; each is associated with supernatural forces and so is not a natural part of the pastoral setting; and each is proud and will not compromise her personal dignity in order to satisfy the demands of human existence.

In the three novels Hardy reveals the woman's singularity by making the man one with the other characters, although he may be more intelligent and sensitive than they are, and by making the woman alienated from them and their society. Each dark lady feels that she is separated from the other characters, and they recognize that she is not like them. As the last chapter indicated, each dark lady prides herself on not being like the others. Each man, however, is part of the community of characters, is basically humble, and is willing to give up his individuality. In The Return of the Native, Hardy draws this contrast clearly. He tells the reader that Clym is one with his environment—"Clym had been so inwoven with the heath in his boyhood that hardly anybody could look upon it without thinking of him" (Return, p. 190)—and that he is liked by and likes his neighbors:
Yeobright loved his kind. He had a conviction that the want of most men was the knowledge of a sort to raise the class at the expense of individuals. . . . What was more, he was ready at once to be the first unit sacrificed (Return, p. 194).

Some twenty pages later Eustacia tells Clym, "I have not much love for my fellow creatures. Sometimes I quite hate them" (Return, p. 211). Hardy indicates the dark lady's singularity in a second way. He associates her with witchcraft. Originally Hardy planned to make Eustacia a witch and even in the novel's final form, he has the other characters half-believe that she is one.

Eustacia feeds their fear by openly despising "the social and moral standards of Egdon," and by disdaining what she sees as their "stupid and dull outlook on life." She even somewhat enjoys the reputation of having unusual powers, for she boasts to Wildeve that she drew him "across the heath to her fire . . . merely to triumph over him as the Witch of Endor called up Samuel." 4

Susan Nunsuch is the most vehement believer in Eustacia's being a witch, and her belief is essential to both the tone of the novel and its plot, for when Susan pricks Eustacia, Clym first learns the identity of the dark knight and goes to help retrieve the well bucket and to meet Eustacia. Susan's fear prompts the look she gives Clym when he visits her after his mother's death, and that look leads to his

temporary acceptance of the other characters' view of Eustacia. In
their quarrel, which immediately follows his visit to Susan, Clym
expresses humanity's horror at the unnatural and the assenter's fear
of the dissenter. He compares his wife to a devil (Return, p. 371) and
warns her not to "bewitch" him again (Return, p. 373). Susan's fear
of Eustacia and the image she melts in the fire seem to be in part
responsible for her death, too, for as Susan sticks the image full of
pins and melts it, Eustacia goes to meet Wildeve whom she despises
and misses the letter from Clym that might prevent her death. The
witch motif is central to The Return of the Native.

Hardy shows the dark lady's singularity in a third way. As
the last chapter pointed out, each dark lady is a proud woman. This
pride is Hardy's way of rendering her sense of individual dignity through
her personality. The dark lady will not compromise her own sense of
what life should be in order to survive in life as it is.

Eustacia will not sacrifice her dignity to the demands of life
on the heath. Clym, on the other hand, is humble and finds satisfaction
in becoming part of the heath as he works as a furze-cutter. Her pride,
first revealed in the "Queen of Night" chapter, combined with Clym's
humility, revealed again and again throughout the novel, is essential to
the action of the plot and to the lovers' eventual tragic estrangement.

5. Ibid., p. 90.
When Clym's blindness prevents him from studying, he becomes a furze-cutter against Eustacia's wishes. She visits him at work one day and overhears him singing. The realization that he can enjoy work which she finds so demeaning both bewilders and angers her: "Even had you felt careless about your own affliction, you might have refrained from singing out of sheer pity for mine. God! if I were a man in such a position I would curse rather than sing!" (Return, p. 289).

Clym cannot understand that her mortification is more than foolish pride, and he seems blind to the fact that his destruction of her dignity is one reason her manner becomes "almost apathetic" and her eyes take on the "forlorn look" which according to Hardy, "whether she deserved it or not, would have excited pity in the breast of any one who had known her during the full flush of her love for Clym" (Return, p. 290). Eustacia realizes that their love, her only reason for existence, is being destroyed. This realization together with her offended dignity prompts her to attend the country dance where she meets Wildeve, dances with him, and revives his love for her. His renewed love leads Wildeve to visit Eustacia, setting up the situation in which Mrs. Yeobright visits Eustacia, is not admitted, and dies on the heath. Her death, together with Susan Nunsuch's accusation of Eustacia, leads to the novel's climactic scene, Clym's accusation of Eustacia. Here Clym stands with the other characters against his dark lady.
After his visit to Susan Nunsuch, Clym confronts Eustacia and accuses her of having been adulterous, of destroying their happiness, and of being perversely devilish and cruel. In this scene Hardy reveals again the antitheses manifested in their personalities. Clym accuses Eustacia and demands that she confess to him, but her strong sense of dignity will not allow her to defend herself. Clym says to her:

"... You have held my happiness in the hollow of your hand, and like a devil you have dashed it down!

"You shut the door--you looked out of the window upon her--you had a man in the house with you--you sent her away to die. The inhumanity--the treachery--I will not touch you--stand away from me--and confess every word!"

"Never! I'll hold my tongue like the very death that I don't mind meeting, even though I can clear myself of half you believe by speaking. Yes, I will! Who of any dignity would take the trouble to clear cobwebs from a wild man's mind after such language as this? No, let him go on, and think his narrow thoughts, and run his head into the mire. I have other cares" (Return, pp. 370-1).

He demands that she show him her letters and accuses her, saying:

"I shall no doubt be gratified by learning in good time what a well-finished and full-blown adept in a certain trade my lady is."

"Do you say it to me--do you." she gasped (Return, pp. 272-3).

Later he warns:

"Don't look at me with those eyes as if you would bewitch me again! Sooner than that I die. You refuse to answer."

"I wouldn't tell you after this, if I were as innocent as the sweetest babe in heaven!"
"Which you are not."

"Certainly I am not absolutely," she replied. "I have not done what you suppose... But I require no help from your conscience" (Return, p. 373).

She will renounce his love rather than accept his pity:

"... Instead of hating you I could, I think, mourn for and pity you, if you were contrite, and would confess all. Forgive you I never can..."

"Say no more... I will do without your pity. But I would have saved you from uttering what you will regret" (Return, p. 373).

In the end Clym sides with the assenters, and Eustacia's spirit breaks as she gives up her love and becomes passive. Yet even then she rebels against the solidarity of nature and society, and still she accuses it:

"You exaggerate fearfully," she said in a faint, weary voice; "but I cannot enter into my own defence--it is not worth doing. You are nothing to me in the future, and the past side of the story may as well remain untold. I have lost all through you, but I have not complained. Your blunders and misfortunes may have been a sorrow to you, but they have been a wrong to me."

"I don't know what you mean by that. Am I the cause of your sin?" (Eustacia made a trembling motion towards him.) "What, you can begin to shed tears and offer me your hand? Good God! can you? No, not I. I'll not commit the fault of taking that... How bewitched I was! How could there be any good in a woman that everybody spoke ill of?"

"O, O, O!" she cried, breaking down at last; and, shaking with sobs which choked her, she sank upon her knees. "O, will you have done! O, you are too relentless--there's a limit to the cruelty of savages! I have held out long--but you crush me down. I beg for mercy--I cannot bear this any longer--it is inhuman to go further with this!" (Return, pp. 374-5).
Clym has sided with the forces of the universe against Eustacia the individual, and with them he has doomed her. However, she does not succumb; hers is the final act, for it is she, not Clym who leaves:

"Tell all, and I will pity you. Was the man in the house with you Wildeve?"

"I cannot tell," she said desperately through her sobbing. "Don't insist further—I cannot tell. I am going from this house. We cannot both stay here."


"Very well--let it be. And when you will confess to the man I may pity you."

She flung her shawl about her and went downstairs, leaving him standing in the room (Return, pp. 375-6).

So their love ends as Eustacia knew that it must, in tragedy.

Hardy's method of establishing the antitheses is quite direct in The Return of the Native, but in Two on a Tower, a novel much weaker in conception and execution than the other two novels under discussion here, his method is a bit more subtle. Like Clym, Swithin is the dark lady's opposite. He is "a pale-haired scientist" whom the villagers consider somewhat peculiar, but who is part of their society. Although Viviette does not hate the villagers as Eustacia did, she does feel herself to be distinct from them.

In this novel the supernatural motif is less important, but it remains present in certain images and in the general action of the plot. Viviette is distrusted by the villagers, who cannot understand her
habitual listlessness and call her "onnatural" (Tower, p. 18). When the rustics discuss her meetings with Swithin on the tower, they say, "If they get up in this tower ruling plannards together much longer, their plannards will rule them together, in my way of thinking" (Tower, p. 97). As Ruth Firor points out, the phrase "ruling the planets" is often used to refer to people with unusual knowledge and power, to a kind of wizardry (p. 101). Furthermore, in the early parts of the novel Viviette, the older woman, seems to look down on the innocent Swithin with evil intentions, like a preying animal. And in fact she does bewitch him figuratively by making him fall in love with her. When Swithin sees Viviette after his long absence he feels as Clym and Angel do, that his dark lady is "another woman . . . not the original Viviette" (Tower, p. 310), and that he was tricked into loving her.

It is Viviette's pride and her passionate love, combined with Swithin's conventionality, which prevents their love from lasting. When Swithin urges Viviette to announce their marriage, she refuses:

She soothed him tenderly, but could not tell him why she felt the reasons against any announcement as yet to be stronger than those in favour of it. How could she, when her feeling had been cautiously fed by her brother Louis's unvarnished exhibition of Swithin's material position in the eyes of the world?--that of a young man, the scion of a family of farmers recently her tenants. . . . (Tower, pp. 214-5).

Pride prevents her from announcing their marriage and from marrying Swithin again when he asks her to after they discover that their original marriage was not valid.
The climax of *Two on a Tower* differs from that of *The Return of the Native* and is weaker than it, for Vivette merely sends Swithin away. However, the group of scenes which lead to their complete estrangement echoes the quarrel scene in *The Return of the Native*. Pride and strong love prompt Vivette to send him away, and shortly after he leaves she discovers that she is pregnant. She attempts to call him back, but cannot find him. Her dilemma is caused by her love and pride and by Swithin's hesitance, his weakness as a lover which prevents him from announcing their marriage himself and allows him to leave Vivette. Hardy indicates that a little more persistence from Swithin would have made Vivette yield. It is the combination of their antithetical personalities which leads to their tragic estrangement, for when Vivette cannot find Swithin, she gives up her hope for happiness, just as did Eustacia. Hardy's description of her state of mind as the bishop comes to propose to her echoes the earlier descriptions of the temporarily broken Eustacia: 
"... by the afternoon she was apathetic, like a woman who neither hoped nor feared" (*Tower*, p. 289). She too sees the universe as having put her in an impossible situation which forces her to betray her lover, and she lets her brother make decisions for her, passively accepting the demands of convention he repeats to her: "It marrying the bishop involved a great wrong, which to her had quite obscured its feasibility. But she perceived now that it was indeed a way. Convention was forcing her hand at this game" (*Tower*, p. 290).
She recognizes that what she is doing is wrong, yet she succumbs temporarily to the demands of existence. After she has consented to marry him, the bishop tells her brother: "Sheer weariness and distraction have driven her to me. She was quite passive at last, and agreed to anything I proposed—" (Tower, p. 291). Viviette does not want to marry the bishop any more than Eustacia wants to conspire with Wildeve; however, Swithin and Clym leave their dark ladies no choice. Swithin is willing to abandon their love temporarily and, although she is still deeply in love with him, Viviette is forced to act as though she no longer loves him and to marry another. Eustacia cannot endure the heath without Clym, so she agrees to meet Wildeve whom she recognizes as unworthy of her; Viviette, weakened by Swithin's absence, cannot resist Louis's influence, so she agrees to marry the Bishop of Melchester whom she does not love. Each woman hates what she must do, but she realizes that there is no longer hope for happiness, and so passively accepts the solution another man offers.

The final scene of Two on a Tower echoes Eustacia and Clym's quarrel scene closely, although it is much less complete. In it, Swithin visits Viviette on the tower after not having seen her for five years. It is as though he is looking at another woman:

6. Two on a Tower is, of course, one of Hardy's weaker novels, and I would like to believe that it is a lapse in artistic vision which lets him say of Viviette, "Convention was forcing her hand at this game; and to what will not convention compel her weaker victims in extremes?" (p. 290).
... He was shocked at her worn and faded aspect. The image he had mentally carried out with him to the Cape he had brought home again as that of the woman he was now to rejoin. But another woman sat before him, and not the original Viviette (Tower, p. 310).

Like Clym, Swithin sees Viviette as the other characters do, and Hardy points out that because Swithin is one with the cruel natural laws he studies he cannot at first see that Viviette still loves him. And like Eustacia, Viviette proudly refuses to defend herself. She even exaggerates the ten-year difference in their ages:

Swithin came forward, and took her by the hand, which she passively allowed him to do.

'Swithin, you don't love me,' she said simply.

'O Viviette!'

'You don't love me,' she repeated.

'Don't say it!' 

'Yes, but I will! You have a right not to love me. You did once. But now I am an old woman, and you are still a young man; so how can you love me? I do not expect it ... You scarcely knew me for the same woman, did you?

'Knew you--yes, of course I knew you!'

'You looked as if you did not. But you must not be surprised at me. I belong to an earlier generation than you, remember.'

Thus, in sheer bitterness of spirit did she inflict wounds on herself by exaggerating the difference in their years ...

'I shall be glad to know through your grandmother how you are getting on,' she said meekly. 'But now I would rather that we part. Good-bye.'
Hardly knowing what he did he touched her hand and obeyed. He was a scientist, and took words literally. There is something in the inexorably simple logic of such men which partakes of the cruelty of the natural laws which are their study. He entered the tower-steps and mechanically descended. . . (Tower, pp. 311-2).

Like the other light men, Swithin turns from his dark lady in the moment of crisis. And like the dark ladies, Viviette makes the final act: she sends Swithin away. So, in this scene which is both shorter and less satisfactory than the fine one in which Clym and Eustacia separate, the events and motives are generally parallel. Swithin reacts with disdain to Viviette, standing on the side of the assenters against her; and she does not defend herself, but makes the breach complete. The end of their love is tragic as Viviette, like Eustacia, knew that it must be.

The antitheses between the dark lady and her light man are established with the most subtlety in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Tess's feeling of isolation from the other rural characters and from the natural phenomena around her was pointed out in the last chapter. Angel's growing sense of unity both with the other characters and with nature is revealed when Hardy describes his "real delight" in being a companion to the dairy folk (*Tess*, p. 137) and his growing knowledge of the country:

He made close acquaintance with phenomena which he had before known but darkly--the seasons in their moods, morning and evening, night and noon in their temperaments, winds in their several dispositions, trees, waters and clouds, shades and silences, *ignes-fatu*, constellations, and the voices of inanimate things (*Tess*, p. 128).
Angel may seem to be separated from the life at Talbothay's dairy, but he feels himself becoming a part of it, while Tess, who seems united with the pastoral life, feels that she is separated from it. What separates her from the others is what alienates every dark lady from the characters around her, her sexual experience and her strong sense of individual dignity. Hardy describes Tess as feeling like "a figure of Guilt intruding into the haunts of Innocence" (Tess, p. 101) and says that at Talbothay's she knows "herself to be more impassioned in nature, cleverer, more beautiful" than the other dairymaids (Tess, p. 170).

There are echoes of witchlore in Tess of the D'Urbervilles, too, and Tess is associated with witchcraft as Eustacia and Viviette were. In the general action of the third, fourth, and fifth sections of the novel, Tess plays the role of demon or witch. She is a dark stranger who descends into the idyllic valley and initiates a series of misfortunes. Two events have specific overtones of witchcraft. Shortly after Tess arrives at the dairy, the cows refuse to give their milk, and the dairy folk blame the presence of the newcomer for it. Dairyman Crick later considers consulting a conjuror for the first time in years when the butter will not come because of Tess and Clare's love. And when the dark stranger leaves the valley she leaves misfortune behind: the dairymaids are ruined and the dairy is no longer prosperous. Then, when Tess tells Clare of her past, he like the other light men, accuses
her of trickery, standing with the other characters against her and seeing her, momentarily, as they do—as a fiendish and inhuman being.

Tess's intense love, combined with her refusal to compromise her vision of life, causes her tragedy. She is proud—she knows that she is more passionate, more sensitive, and more intelligent than the other dairymaids—and she is deeply in love with Clare. The two forces, her love and her pride, become one. In her love for Clare, Tess can see no wrong in what he does to her. When she tells him about her past and he refuses to forgive her, she does not question his decision.

The events which bring about their first separation cover several days. In the scene which initiates the crisis, Tess tells Clare about Alec. He is shocked, feels that she is no longer the same woman, and calls her a trickster. Clare judges her as the other characters would.

Tess asks:

"In the name of our love, forgive me."

"O Tess, forgiveness does not apply to the case! You were one person; now you are another. My God—how can forgiveness meet such a grotesque—prestidigitation as that!"

"O, how can it be that you look and speak so? It frightens me! Having begun to love 'ee, I love 'ee forever—in all changes, in all disgraces, because you are yourself. I ask no more. Then how can you, O my own Husband, stop loving me?"

"I repeat, the woman I have been loving is not you."
"But who?"

"Another woman in your shape" (Tess, pp. 258-9).

Tess, like the other dark ladies, is shocked and temporarily broken by his betrayal. Hardy describes her much as he did Eustacia and Viviette:

She perceived in his words the realization of her own apprehensive foreboding in former times. He looked upon her as a species of imposter; a guilty woman in the guise of an innocent one. Terror was upon her white face as she saw it; her cheek was flaccid, her mouth had almost the aspect of a round little hole. The horrible sense of his view of her so deadened her appearance that he stepped forward, thinking she was going to fall (Tess, p. 259).

When Tess realizes that Clare does not want her love, she tells him that she will go home. Like the other two major dark ladies, she makes the act of separation. Hardy says that "a woman of the world might have conquered him . . . Clare, through his back current of sympathy" (Tess, p. 272). Tess, however, is not a woman of the world. She does not even consider making such attempt because she will not take normal measures to keep her husband, for she is not a normal woman and she does not believe that Clare can be wrong about her. As a result, she refuses even to question his actions and all but suffocates her own dignity in her intense devotion to her vision of Clare as god-like:

. . . She took everything as her desserts, and hardly opened her mouth. The firmness of her devotion to him was indeed almost pitiful; quick-tempered as she naturally was, nothing
that he could say made her unseemly; she sought not her own; was not provoked; thought no evil of his treatment of her" (Tess, pp. 272-3).

When her mother, representative of typical, pragmatic humanity, chides Tess for leaving Clare, Tess says that she does not regret the decision and tells her mother, "I could not help it; he was so good--and I felt the wickedness of trying to blind him as to what had happened! If--if--it were to be done again--I should do the same. I could not--I dared not--to sin--against him!" (Tess, p. 289). The italics are mine, and the phrase "to sin" indicates the nature of Tess's attitude toward Clare, whom she has invested with the dignity that is in actuality her own. Angel is not, however, the godly man Tess sees him to be. It is her conception of him, the ultimate and natural outcome of the dark lady's love and her sense of pride, which causes her to believe that he can be sinned against. She loves Clare intensely, she realizes that she is a noble person, and she invests him with the godliness which is actually her own. Hardy indicates her mistaken estimation of Clare when he says that "over them both there hung a deeper shade than the shade which Angel Clare perceived, namely, the shade of his own limitations" (Tess, p. 298)--his acceptance of society's estimation of Tess and his ability to live without her love.

When Tess temporarily confuses his error with truth, she accepts his decree that she not come to him, agreeing to play a totally passive role. She foreshadows her eventual indictment of the universe
which his decision represents, however, by warning him: "I agree to the conditions, Angel; only--don't 'ee make it more than I can bear!" (Tess, p. 285). And she obeys the decree, refusing even to write to him until it is too late for him to reach her in time.

After Tess leaves her parents' home, she chooses to starve rather than seek help from Clare's family. Hardy says that the more she thinks of asking for the money Clare left her, the more reluctant she becomes about taking it: "The same delicacy, pride, false shame, whatever it may be called, on Clare's account, which had led her to hide from her own parents the prolongation of the estrangement, hindered her in owning to his that she was in want. . . ." (Tess, p. 307).

Although Tess's love and her pride at first lead her to accept Clare's decree and his judgment of her, she eventually rejects both and like every dark lady, protests against the injustice and indignity of life. After Angel leaves her, she is willing to endure suffering and an even more intense isolation than she knew before, but when Alec begins to court her again, she becomes so afraid of what will happen that she writes to Clare:

The punishment you have measured out to me is deserved, indeed--I do know that--well deserved--and you are right and just to be angry with me. But, Angel, please, please not to be just--only a little kind to me, even if I do not deserve it, and come to me! . . . I am desolate without you. . . (Tess, p. 376).

She has broken her resolve and questioned Clare's mercy, but not his
judgment. He does not return, however, and Tess's father dies, leaving her family homeless. As Tess stands worrying about what is to be done, Alec rides up and asks her to come back to his home at Tantridge, offering to care for her family. She refuses, but he tells her that she has no choice because she will not ask for help from Angel's parents, "You won't, Tess; I know you; you'll starve first!" (Tess, p. 399). He knows that her pride will not allow her to seek help from them, and he is right. After he leaves, Tess recognizes the impossibility of her position and cries out against the cruelty of human existence:

Tess remained where she was a long while, till a sudden rebellious sense of injustice caused the region of her eyes to swell with the rush of hot tears thither. Her husband, Angel Clare himself, had, like others, dealt out hard measure to her; surely he had! She had never before admitted such a thought; but he had surely! Never in her life--she could swear it from the bottom of her soul--had she intended to do wrong; yet these hard judgments had come. Whatever her sins, they were not sins of intention, but of inadvertence, and why should she have been punished so persistently?

She passionately seized the first piece of paper that came to hand, and scribbled the following lines:

"Oh, why have you treated me so monstrously, Angel! I do not deserve it. I have thought it all over carefully, and I can never, never forgive you! You know that I did not intend to wrong you--why have you so wronged me? You are cruel, cruel indeed! I will try to forget you. It is all injustice I have received at your hands!--T." [italics mine] (Tess, p. 399).

This outcry echoes Eustacia's accusation of Clym. Just as Tess is made a dark lady physically and psychologically in the course of the novel, so is she made one spiritually by the time it ends. She comes to realize
what Eustacia knew from the beginning, that life is hellish and love transitory.

Like the others, Tess no longer hopes for happiness. She asks for death when, after her realization that Angel has betrayed her, Alec warns that she will be his. She lies against the entrance to her ancestors' vault and asks, "Why am I on the wrong side of this door?" (Tess, p. 408). She has renounced all hope for happiness when she goes with Alec. Hardy does not show her consenting to go, but he says when she next appears in the novel that she seems "like a fugitive in a dream" (Tess, p. 425), and Angel observes that "his original Tess had spiritually ceased to recognize the body before him as hers--allowing it to drift, like a corpse upon the current, in a direction dissociated from its living will" (Tess, p. 426). These descriptions of the spiritless Tess echo earlier descriptions of broken and apathetic dark ladies who have resigned themselves to never finding happiness, and who look forward to no more than the relief death will bring. 7

Tess's furious outcry and her dream-like existence indicate that she has seen what life is and even what Angel is. After murdering Alec, she asks Angel, "Why did you go away--why did you--when I loved you so? I can't think why you did it. But I don't blame you; only,

7. Characters besides the dark ladies have this attitude, too, but they arrive at it by different routes and their deaths are not acts of censure as are those of the dark ladies.
Angel, will you forgive me my sin against you, now I have killed him?" (Tess, p. 432). She no longer accepts his judgment, but she forgives him for making it.

In the end, Tess and Angel have a brief period of joy like that which Hardy evidently shared with Tryphena, and which both Eustacia and Viviette enjoy; she and Clare live together in a deserted mansion. However, Tess recognizes that their love cannot endure and that life offers no permanent happiness. She tells Clare as she looks out from the house, "All is trouble outside there; inside here content!" (Tess, p. 439).

And as the men come to take her to be hanged, Tess tells Clare that she is glad she is to die. "Yes, glad! This happiness could not have lasted. It was too much. I have had enough, and now I shall not live for you to despise me!" (Tess, p. 445). Tess knows what each dark lady eventually realizes, that she cannot find permanent joy, even in the man she loves. When she recognizes that she will not find a fit home in this universe, she wants to extinguish the fiery glow that is her spirit and to end her existence forever.
In the course of his career as a fiction writer Hardy discovered that the dark lady, the dissenter, is a worthy person and that her view of life as a cruel indignity is correct. His attitude toward her did not change smoothly; he used her first as a villainess, then as a protagonist, changing again and again. However, his initial attitude was completely reversed, and it was with the dark lady that Hardy finally created women of tragic magnitude. Although his conception of Eustacia may be questioned, with Tess the dark lady becomes his tragic heroine. Tess is a good woman who does no evil yet is punished; she is a fine, sensitive, visionary being who cannot find peace or happiness in the world and so must die. By Hardy's definition Tess is a truly tragic character: she is a worthy person encompassed by inevitable tragedy.

John Holloway and D. H. Lawrence point out the change in Hardy's attitude toward the antithetical forces which most critics recognize in his works. Holloway describes the antitheses as revealing the sociological and technical changes of the age and says that Hardy eventually recognized that the old order of life, that of the Wessex farmer, was not only vanishing, but "did not possess the inner resources
upon which to make a real fight for its existence."¹ He terms those characters who are not typical of the country déraciné, uprooted, and traces the reversal of Hardy's attitude toward them. Hardy asserts the old order's "rewarding unrewardingness" in The Return of the Native by destroying or changing any rebels in the novel, ² but in The Woodlanders he reveals the old order's weakness. ³ In Tess the change in his attitude is complete, according to Holloway, for this novel is the story of a woman who "has a weakness . . . an alienation, a dreaminess," and who, although she "is at first deeply and fully set in the traditional and organic life of her rural society, . . . is as the novel proceeds . . . steadily driven out of it, until by the end of the work she is a complete outcast."⁴ Tess is Hardy's pure woman and she is also alien to the force of normal, rural life. She is, as the novel ends, déraciné, and like all the earlier rebels she is destroyed. Her destruction is portrayed, not as an affirmation of the old order however, but as a denunciation of it.

Lawrence does not interpret Hardy's career as Holloway does, but he also points out the importance of the change in Hardy's attitude.

² Ibid., p. 54.
³ Ibid., p. 55.
⁴ Ibid., pp. 114-5.
As Chapter Two indicated, Lawrence traces the reversal in Hardy's use of alien characters in his discussion of the characters he calls aristocrats, those dissenters whose existence criticizes the life of the assenting country folk. Lawrence says that Hardy's characterization of such people moves from making them villains to making them sympathetic, until he finally creates a Jude Fawley who is both hero and dissenter. Both critics point out that the alien, atypical character—whose female version is the dark lady—changes from antagonist to protagonist.

However, although both Holloway and Lawrence imply that the change in Hardy's attitude was orderly and smooth, the dates of the short stories and novels' publication reveal that the reversal was not uninterrupted. Miss Aldclyffe, antagonist, appeared in 1871. Eustacia, an ambiguous protagonist, appeared in 1878. Two years later, "Interlopers at the Knap" and "Fellow-Townsmen," short stories containing dark ladies as antagonists, appeared. Then in 1882 Hardy published Two on a Tower with its dark heroine Viviette Constantine. Two antagonists appeared next, Lucetta Farfrae in 1886 and Felice Charmond in 1887. The next year the short story "The Withered Arm" appeared with its sympathetic dark lady Rhoda Brook. Three years later, in 1891, Hardy published Tess of the D'Urbervilles.

5. Lawrence, p. 48.
One cannot say, then, that Hardy's attitude changed smoothly, only that he saw the dark lady first as villainess and finally as heroine and that the reversal in his attitude can be traced in those novels in which the dark lady is most fully developed, *The Return of the Native*, *Two on a Tower*, and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

The dark lady always views life as tragic and suspects that it offers her no lasting happiness. Miss Aldclyffe recognizes life's tragedy as does Eustacia. The assenters do not see its tragedy, however. Each light man places strong faith in love while the dark lady recognizes that although it is the only joy life offers, love is doomed. Eustacia tells Clym, "I shall ruin you... Kiss me, and go away forever... It is your only chance" (*Return*, p. 224). And later she speaks with horror of a time when she will not be able to love Clym. But the men who place strong faith in love think the women's fears foolish. Clym tells Eustacia that if they cannot love each other, they will say, "I have outlived my faith and purpose," and will die (*Return*, p. 227). Viviette warns Swithin that their love cannot endure: "Nothing can come of this, --nothing must" (*Tower*, p. 106). Tess knows that love cannot last but she cannot resist the brief joy it promises: "She walked in brightness, but she knew that in the background those shapes of darkness were always spread. They might be receding, or they might be approaching, one or the other, a little every day" (*Tess*, p. 223). Eventually Hardy confirms the dark lady's view of life and writes novels which are tragic,
novels in which the dark lady appears as protagonist and faces the dilemma of a life which can neither fulfill nor console her.

At first, however, he affirmed the assenter's faith in life's "rewarding unrewardingness." In the woodland setting the dark lady is distinctive, and when the point of view is that of the typical rural characters as it is in much of the fiction, she looks evil and frightening. From this point of view, the dark lady is seen as a sinister, witch-like figure, and Hardy uses witchlore to characterize her.

When, in The Return of the Native, Hardy first began to show life from the dark lady's viewpoint, the result was ambiguity. Hardy at first made Eustacia a witch, as John Paterson's study of the novel's composition reveals:

\[\ldots\text{The Return of the Native must originally have taken the form of a pastoral narrative, unifying the supernaturalism of The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid and the naturalism of Far From the Madding Crowd and Tess of the D'Urbervilles.}\]

\[\ldots\text{The first major decision in the making of the novel involved the revaluation and transvaluation of its basic form.} 6\]

At first Hardy saw Eustacia from the assenter's point of view and envisioned her as evil and inhuman. "The splendid creature who now dominates the novel as the 'errring' heroine to Thomasin's 'pure' heroine earlier recalled not the romantic protagonist but the wicked and even disreputable antagonist. In her initial appearance, indeed, she was to

---

have suggested a satanic creature supernatural in origin. However, Hardy's sympathy was already beginning to move from the rural characters to the aristocratic dark lady as his view of the antitheses began to change.

Paterson describes the development of Eustacia as heuristic, saying that as Hardy wrote the novel "the images of the characters and the incidents tended to take control and to dictate their own conditions:"

The novel was on the way, as has been seen, to duplicating the relatively limited achievement of Far From the Madding Crowd. In the heat of its development, however, Hardy literally discovered in the major imagery of the characters and the incidents of the plot what he had apparently failed to discover in the similar imagery of Far From the Madding Crowd: the possibilities for theme, symbol, and structure. He discovered, in the emergent Promethean motif, in the adaptability of character, scene and incident to symbolic purposes, and in the development of the classical frame of reference, those artistic controls which, however loosely and inconsistently applied, were to give the novel an advantage in form and vision over Far From the Madding Crowd.

When he revised the novel, changing the dark lady from a witch to the high-spirited, majestic "queen of night" whom he clearly admires, Hardy shifted the focus of the novel and began showing the dark lady's view of life with sympathy. The reversal in his attitude was not yet complete, however, for although he was careful to emphasize Eustacia's "artistic ascendancy over the country folk among whom she had been

7. Ibid., p. 17.
8. Ibid., pp. 135-6.
cast" and to make her great dignity manifest, he had not yet fully affirmed the dark lady's view of human existence. Eustacia may seem to be the heroine, but Hardy's view of her is ambiguous. Clym's assent is as much valued as Eustacia's rebellion, and Hardy never clarifies which view of life is true, who is protagonist, or whether or not the novel is a tragedy.

His sympathy for the dark lady developed further in Two on a Tower, where Viviette is both admired and made the sole protagonist. Viviette is associated with witchcraft and called unnatural, but these accusations reflect the country folk's foolishness more than Viviette's unnaturalness. While Hardy and his readers half share Susan Nunsuch's suspicion of Eustacia, they laugh at the choir's simplicity when it attributes Viviette's bored listlessness to the supernatural. This novel is told from Viviette's viewpoint. Hardy's sympathy is for the dark lady, and he tells the reader that Swithin the fair young assenter is not worthy of her.

Hardy's final confirmation of the dark lady's point of view comes in Tess. From the beginning both Hardy and his readers see the novel from her point of view. She is mistrusted by the assenters, but Hardy makes it clear that those who see her as evil are themselves narrow and insensitive. She is presented as a good and noble person whose

9. Ibid., pp. 84-5.
environment--people, circumstance, and life itself--is evil and perverse. While Hardy uses witch imagery and motifs to characterize Tess, he uses them with restraint. They serve to emphasize her separation from the other characters and the "nature" to which they assent. The outcome of this, the final novel in which the dark lady appears, confirms her view of life, showing that Hardy shared her judgment that life as it must be lived is a place of banishment to those individuals who must remain true to their individual vision of life.

Jude the Obscure, the only novel Hardy wrote after Tess, is the story of another dark rebel, a man who shares the dark lady's tragic view of life and her doom. 10

In the three novels centered around fully developed dark ladies, Hardy moves from seeing the world from the point of view of those assenting characters who oppose and censure her to seeing it as she does and with her censuring the injustice of human life. Although he uses witchlore to characterize each dark lady, his purpose changes until in Tess witchcraft is only a motif which shows the dark lady to be distinct from the more conventional characters who cannot understand her. In The Return of the Native witchlore is used to cast suspicion on Eustacia, in Two on a Tower it reveals the country folk's

10. Because my study is limited to female dissenters, it does not discuss Jude the Obscure. However, I do see a possible connection between the character Jude and the dark ladies. There are dark men as well as women, and their development seems to lead to Jude just as that of the ladies does to Tess.
simplicity, and in *Tess* it separates the dark lady from those around her, who are shown to be narrow and mean.

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, the last novel in which the dark lady appears, Hardy confirms her view of life more powerfully and with greater artistic success than he did those of the fair, assenting heroes and heroines. He moves from confirming the assenter's estimation of life to confirming the dissenter's rebellion. As Lawrence says, the conclusion drawn from his novels is that the assenter "is a thing, finally, . . . ugly, undeveloped, nondistinguished . . . which remains . . . fitted into the community" and "the physical and spiritual individualist is a fine thing which must fall because of its own isolation, because it is a sport, not in the true line of life." The point of view moves finally to the dark lady, Hardy affirms her view of life, and the reversal in his attitude toward the antitheses central to his fiction is complete. The dark lady, not the fair heroine of the early novels, becomes his tragic heroine. She stands for sensitive mankind against the harshness of an uncaring universe and a compassionless society.

---

11. Lawrence, p. 49.
LITERATURE CITED


_________o Tryphena and Thomas Hardy. Beaminster, Dorset, 1962.


Hardy, Florence. The Early Life of Thomas Hardy. New York, 1928.


_________o The Short Stories of Thomas Hardy. London, 1928.


Two Wessex Tales. Boston, 1919.


Lawrence, D. H. "Hardy's Prédilection d'artiste," Hardy: A Collection... Essays, pp. 46-51.


Scott-James, Rolfe A. Thomas Hardy. New York, 1951.

