

# [An analysis of the causes](https://assignbuster.com/an-analysis-of-the-causes/)

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One a series of tragedies which appear to be both unexpected and predestinated. The causes of her tragedy scatter on a relatively large scale ranging from the Internal factor (her heroism) to the inevitable external factors including society, law and religion. In this paper, the varied causes of Test’s tragedy will be analyzed at length so as to present to the readers her predestinated tragic fate in this story.

Introduction The Victorian era of Brittle history refers to the period of Queen Victorians reign room June 22 of 1837 until her death on January 22 in 1901. Victorian England saw great expansion of wealth and power along with the emergence of peace and prosperity. Culturally there was a transition away from the rationalism of the Georgian period and toward romanticism and mysticism with regard to religion, social values, and the arts (Dixon 34). The era is characterized by the values of social and sexual restraint. Which in a large part gives rise to the literary tradition of refined sensibilities.

Born in the early period of Victorian era, Thomas Hardy lived his life in time of rapid social changes due to Britain’s transition from an old-fashioned agricultural nation too modern industrial one.

Although Hardy viewed himself first and foremost a poet, he Is mostly remembered by the world for his reputation as a successful novelist. Despite the fact that Hardy resembles his Victorian contemporaries in many essential respects, he can hardly be categorized exclusively as a Victorian novelist. He did not seek for models from his predecessors and often deliberately abandoned the works of the nineteenth century.

Hardy initiated things In his works that the Victorians were unwilling to reveal. HIS subject matters, along with his writing style and techniques meet the demand of the modernists.

Likewise, he cannot be labeled a modernist either notwithstanding the traits of modern innovation as is clearly shown in his major works. Reflected in Hardy’s literary works Is the transitional trend from traditional to modern literature, and the Inspiration from both inheriting and challenging conventions of nineteenth-century at the same time. Masterpiece which serves as a strong demonstration of his perspectives as a thinker and techniques as a writer.

The heroin Tees, who is from a humble rural family, is resurged by her parent’s to “ make kin” with a local noble family the daredevil’s as her father learns earlier that they are relations. She procures a Job there tending fowls at their family estate where she is seduced and raped by Aleck, the dandy son of Mrs..

daredevil’s. Tees gives birth to Ale’s child after she returns to her family but the baby named Sorrow dies soon afterwards. Determined to start everything all over again, she accepts a Job as a milkmaid at the Tollbooths Dairy where she finds the love of her life Angel Clare, the son of a clergyman.

Their love for each other grows thronged each day and they get engaged soon afterwards. With their wedding day coming near, Tees starts to get tortured more and more by her own conscience. Eventually she makes a confession of her impure past to Angel and is abandoned cruelly by him, struggling alone in the dark for years.

In the end, Tees is forced to give up fighting and return to the evil Aleck but stabs him to death when she learns that Angel tries to find and forgive her. The story ends with Test’s arrest and execution. Thomas Hardy’s Tees of the Derailleur’s shows significant breaks from the Victorian beliefs, styles, and techniques.

Hardy emphasizes the struggles of the “ man and woman” relationship and addresses the individual development of his characters opposed to the society as a whole. In this novel, Tees is depicted by Hardy as a victimized and fallen rural woman.

She not only struggles to survive in life but also suffers from humiliation and pain in love. Refusing to succumb to the reality, she learns in a hard way the bitterness she has to bite. Poverty-stricken, raped, abandoned twice and finally executed to death, Test’s miserable short life echoes the image of a lower class woman repeatedly crushed by the world inside and outside.

The contradiction between the awakening female consciousness and conventional social norms is the ultimate cause of her tragic life. To be more specific, the causes of her predestinated tragedies can be divided into two categories, namely, internal and external. Internal cause- Test’s heroism Tees is portrayed in the novel as a gorgeous and pure woman.

Angel describes her appearance in such an overwhelming way as that “ he had never before seen a women’s lips and teeth which forced upon his mind with such persistent iteration the old Elizabethan simile of roses filled with snow’ (Hardy 209).

Her physical beauty is strengthened by her inner beauty, strong sense of responsibility, independence, clear-conscience and self-sacrifice. All these characteristics combined contribute to Test’s heroism which accounts largely for the tragedies in her later life. Test’s heroism runs through the whole novel, from the very beginning to the very end. “ Test’s acute sense of responsibility, which may lead to the assumption of tasks, to be done or to the sense of guilt for things done or left undone, is a strong unifying element”(Hellman P. M).

In the beginning of the story, when Test’s parent’s persuade Emily can hopefully make a fortune, Tees despises that idea and refuses to do so. But later when she lost their precious family money-maker, the horse, she feels deeply guilty for causing the loss and making her family suffer. So she decides to go against her wills and visits derailleur’s family. It is Just this strong acute sense of responsibility that provokes the bold action of working alone in a place of danger (Ale’s constant seduction) which in some way leads to all her later tragic stories. Hardy treats this (the seduction) as the moment from which Test’s heroism begins King 113).

Nearing the end of the story, Tees is forced to become Ale’s mistress also as a consequence of her strong responsibility for her starving family. Independence is another mirror of Test’s heroism. Tees is by no meaner the model of an independent, self-reliant woman who counts on nobody but herself. She might have illusions about financial stability ever after when she accepts Angel’s proposal, but she doesn’t hesitate even for a brief moment to start all over again when Angel abandons her and leaves for Brazil.

Tees has two major heroic actions in this novel, nee is when her and Ale’s illicit baby dies, and the other is when she hears nothing from her love far away in Brazil. In both situations, she chooses to step forward on her own, leaving the past behind and moving on with her life by herself.

Even when she is almost destitute, she refuses to ask for any assistance from Angel’s father and insists to make a hard living on her own. Test’s heroism is for the most part contributed to her strong sense of independence. Clear conscience and self- sacrifice are two essential elements of Test’s heroism.

She is moderately religious with a pure heart and a clear self-conscience. As a decent religious woman with integrity, she can’t hide her spotted past from her own conscience even though her mom warns her repeatedly not to reveal to anybody. She finally confesses her impure history to her new husband only to find she doesn’t receive the forgiveness she expected from him.

Tees could have lived a happy ever after life with the love of her life without him knowing anything about her past, but she risks her whole life happiness to make her conscience clear.

At the end of the novel, she murdered Aleck and flees to the Stonehenge with Angel. When she wakes up to all the policemen in rent of her, Tees calmly expresses her reaction to the arrest and possible execution. “ I’m almost glad- yes glad! It was too much – I have had enough” (Hardy 487). Her readiness for death reveals her sought for eternal clear conscience and self-sacrifice. If she weren’t as religious and decent as she is, she could have had a while different life story.

Tees is characterized by her heroism and at the same time victimized by it.

The awakening female consciousness is exposed exclusively on her and she faithfully presents the rising feminist power in that society. Her heroic mentality and obelisks spirits serve the purpose of female self-consciousness in Victorian era, but also inevitably provokes the social norms that send her down to the abyss of misery and despair. External causes There is no doubt that the most essential and fundamental cause for the heroic girl’s tragedy lies in the society? the Victorian convention (Yang 72). With her social status and family background, Test’s life is doomed to be tragic.

The society she lives in is one that immense social changes are happening, double standards are put on opposite sexes, and religion is no longer trusted as to “ provide acceptable rules of ender such circumstances.

Tees is the representative of those women. The essential external causes of Test’s tragedies include the declining rural society, the prevalence of patriarchy and also the hypocritical religion in that society. 3. 1 Declining rural economy The set of Tees of the Derailleur’s is in the late nineteen century (or Victorian era) when Britain was undergoing a substantial amount of changes.

Among which the transition from traditional agricultural economy to modern industrialized one is fundamental.

Tees is born in a humble family with her father being a village peddler. At that time, rural economy in Britain had already lost its privilege and was experiencing a declining trend due to the invasion of capitalist economy. At the end of nineteenth century, capitalist economy is growing at a rapid rate in cities and also expanding to the rural areas. As businessmen and entrepreneurs Join in sharing the rural estate and wealth, some rural families, even of the ancient aristocracy, fades into obscurity.

The original pattern of rural economy is heavily influenced detrimentally, while the previous harmony and peacefulness are also broken down.

Majority of peasants lose heir farmland, their small family business and become poverty-stricken. “ The laborers and farmers without power or money lie at the bottom of the society and consequently have to suffer all sorts of oppressions and humiliations from the capitalist society, including the ones of economy, power and influence, body, still more of spirit, religion, morality and traditional concepts” ( Lie 235).

Therefore, when it comes to Jobs, destitute rural women have no choice but to accept whatever that is available to them. In Tees of the Derailleur’s, Hardy depicts such pictures vividly in detail. There are seven children in Test’s family which is a huge burden in terms of their family income.

Her father makes a living by delivering beehives on the only old family horse. He is apparently depressed and frustrated constantly so alcohol is his loyal friend. That is also a major reason why he is so thrilled and upside down when he learns that they are related to a local noble family.

Because they have absolutely no other opportunities to climb the social ladder or enhance their financial status. The ridicule of Test’s father also mirrors a harsh reality in late Victorian period, that s, class is no longer evaluated by blood alone without any reference to wealth or social status as it would have been in the Middle Age. In the context of capital society, fortune overweight lineage.

The invasion of capitalist economy can also be reflected through the workplaces Tees has been to. Compared to the traditional rural family business, capitalist economy is on a much larger scale and it requires more employees to work for them.

Tollbooths Dairy and Flintlock Ash farm are two representatives of the capitalist mode of production while Tees and her peers (Size, Retry, and Marina) stand for the hired rural work force. However, in line with the wealth generated by mass production is the misery of the laborers and farmers. This can be particularly seen in the Flintlock-Ash farm, a stark and hostile working place where Tees and her peers struggle in misery and depression because of the oppression and exploitation by the cruel, money-worshipping capitalists.

The reason of Test’s second falling into Ale’s trap is a forced choice merely to survive on earth. Tragic. As can be drawn from the context of the novel, a rural woman at that time is born to be suffering unless she is married to a noble gentleman. Not only Tees but re friends and sisters share the same fate. They have no other options but to accept their destiny.

3. 2 Prevalence of patriarchy Victorian society is one that features on the predominant male power and double moral standards. Women are placed at the subordinate social rank and are always the victim of that.

The cruel Nature’s Law?” once a victim, always a victim” is deeply rooted in people’s mind; Man belongs to the active, changing social order, while woman is in contrast (Yang 72). The prevalence of patriarchy in Victorian era echoes the two recurrent themes of Tees of the Derailleur’s, the male domination and aired ethic principles for male and female.

Test’s life and destiny are closely related to three men, namely, her father John Direfully, the evil dandy Aleck Derailleur’s and her beloved husband Angel Clare.

Different as they are, they all share the same trait of exerting power over women (mainly Tees) primarily due to their male chauvinism. Drenched in alcohol and illusions, John Direfully has never taken his full responsibility to support the whole family. Nevertheless, his wife expresses nothing but obedience and assistance even when he is squandering their extremely limited fortune. Husbands acclaim absolute eight over their wives in patriarchal society.

“ It is her duty to obey him in all things, which is like China’s three obedience and four virtues” (Lie 235).

Aleck derailleur’s, a prurient, pretentious and morally deteriorated man from a rich family, exemplifies the male domination to a perfect extent. He doesn’t even care what a woman really wants or needs; all he manages to accomplish instead is to satisfy his greed and lust towards the young and innocent Tees. After several unsuccessful attempts to seduce Tees, he lures her into his trap and ruthlessly deprives her of her chastity which is valued more than life by women in that society. She can only ask herself “ Was once lost always lost really true of chastity’ (Hardy 150).

He totally destroyed an innocent girl physically and spiritually.

Yet he is not the one that gets belittled and despised by the public but Tees, the victim. In the beginning, Angel’s manly manipulation of Tees is hardly recognizable. In effect, he controls her in a more subtle and less obvious way. Tees spends her entire life loving Angel wholeheartedly without any complaint or bitterness. Even a glimpse from him can make her thrilled like a child. Indeed, “ Angel is too much to see how he is hurting Tees” (Hellman P.

X).

Double moral standards for male and female fully explains Angel’s attitudes towards Tees after her confession. As well-cultivated and pure as he appears, he also views Tees as his private possession that serves only as his very own property. He dominates Tees in a less obvious than Aleck but in some sense more thorough and cruel because he tortures Tees by suppressing her own identity and past experiences, albeit unknowingly. While Tees forgives his debauchery immediately after his confession, he has the hardest time returning the same amount of forgiveness to her. O, Tees, forgiveness does not apply to the case! You were one person; now you are another” (Hardy 347).

The moral standard for male is that if you are decent and honest about your impure past, you deserve to be forgiven. However, submissive females are not given the equivalent rights. Their woman. The prevalence of patriarchy entails that “ women who are put in a subordinate status are surrounded by traditional moral rules and ethics in a man-dominated society and become men’s dependency even plaything” (Lie 236).

As a woman in a man’s world, Tees inevitably encounters frustration and miseries caused by dominating male power, therefore her tragedies are in certain sense inescapable.

. 3 Paradoxical religion The influence of Christianity and the Holy Bible roots deeply in Hardy’s works, Tees of the Derailleur’s included . Victorian period, however, is one of paradoxical changes especially in religion. Hardy was born in a very religious family and was instilled Christian values and thoughts in every aspect. Later in his life, his firm Christian beliefs are shaken as a consequence of the wide circulation of certain agnostic works.

Hence he holds an ambivalent view towards religion to the extent that he starts to question the nature of Christianity and the existence of God. Unfairness and injustice f religion have penetrated deeply into the novel Tees of the Derailleur’s. The pre-Christian rituals practiced by the farm workers at the beginning of the novel, and Test’s final rest at Stonehenge before she gets arrested, remind us of a religious world where the God offers little Justice or fairness (Zoo 43). Moreover, Angel Clare comes from a highly religious family with his father being a clergyman.

He can be regarded as a saint Just like his name “ Angel” and he should have demonstrated more sympathy to Tees and save her from immense guilt, instead he ruthlessly punishes her by abandoning her physically and torturing her spiritually. If Aleck destroys Test’s purity physically, then Angel goes way further and ruins her life with the punishment of love.

Ironically, this Angel does not rescue Tees but puts her to death instead, which serves as a satire of the paradoxical even hypocritical religion in Victorian period.

When it comes to Ale’s convert to God, it is indisputable that he merely uses religion as a meaner of covering his past crimes. The converted Aleck preaches heavenly Justice for earthly sinners, but his faith seems shallow and insincere. His hypocritical and evil nature can not be hidden by faking to be religious. At the end of the story, he threatens Tees repeatedly in order to trick her back to him, and that’s when the so called “ religious faith” begins to collapse inside him and the evil nature is revealed again.

Tees represents the image of scapegoat in Christianity.

Her strong sense of redemption promotes her action of taking all the punishments and oppressions. Innocent and pure as she is, she is viewed as a sinner not only by the public but by herself too, hence the tragic life and endless suffering. 4. Conclusion Tees has been one of the most successful “ tragic woman” literary images ever reared in Thomas Hardy’s works or even in the world literature.

Being victimized and crushed, she remains strong and calm despite the unbearable hopelessness and powerlessness.

During her two main heroic struggles? “ first for freedom, and then for mere survival” (King 1 17), Tees presents herself as a courageous and persevering fighter. Nevertheless, her brave fighting against fate can not release her from the abyss of tragedies. Her final death again echoes the words that “ Once a victim, always Internal and external causes combined, it is most definitely impossible for Tees to avoid being a tragic heroin.

The innate heroism Tees possesses enables her to sustain positive energy even under adverse circumstances but also destroys her thoroughly that she is native enough to challenge the world at the price of her precious life. Furthermore, the external social factors are even more fundamental in causing Test’s tragedies.

The downward trend of rural society leads its people to the awareness that they are born to be suffering. The dominating male power and hypocritical religion, along with other Victorian social customs and conventions are overwhelming to a rural woman who loses her chastity.