

Tess of the
d'urbeviles – hardys
view on
industrialisation
essay



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Explore Hardy's attitude towards industrialisation in phase the fourth.

Industrialisation became a growing presence amongst the Victorian Era and had an elusive yet undeniable impact on the population. Within the novel Tess Of The d'Urbervilles and in particular phase the fourth, Industrialisation is heavily focused on and explored. However Hardy establishes a balanced and ambivalent viewpoint towards the implications and presence of Industry as there is evidence to suggest both positive and negative aspects to its advancement.

This therefore demonstrates that Hardy, especially through his effective use of binary oppositions offers a complex view which evokes a variety of Interpretations. To successfully convey clear comparisons between industrial interventions and rural aspects of pastoral life, Hardy uses binary oppositions to effectively highlight these contrasts. For example, parallel distinctions between light and shade / symbolic colours (Industry vs. Country) are made apparent in chapter xxx.

This is shown when a ' feeble light was beginning to assert its presence' used to describe the train and this is in contrast to the ' expanse of shade' which represents the countryside. The connotations of ' light' against what essentially is darkness may that the train of which modern life represents offers optimism, hope and a prosperous future compared to the harsh standstill that is rural life. However this can also be successfully challenged with the argument that the light is superficial and not real which can justify its feebleness, and offer a rather negative and weak view of industrialisation.

Another interpretation to this comparison may be that the fact the light of the train 'asserts' itself suggests that industrialisation is imposing itself on rural life and the environment in quite a forceful yet inevitable manner. To further support this, the 'fitful white streak of steam' which asserted itself on the 'dark green background' can be effectively seen as symbolic of the demising taint of which industry inflicts on the rural landscape.

Furthermore this conjunction/fusion of industry on the country side again highlights the obvious visible contrast and proposed artificial lights/ colours against the natural and pure landscape. This proposes that Hardy presents quite a negative and tarnishing view of industrialisation and its impact on the countryside. However the negative perception of Industry is counter argued with the inclusion of the celestial and terrestrial comparisons, for example 'terrestrial star yet in more importance... to mankind than the celestial ones'.

This is of high significance because it directly addresses the view that although nature a creation by god, which is represented by the natural celestial star is grand and majestic, however it is not always useful especially when in contrast to an evolving modern (manmade) industrial world. This can be therefore effectively be argued that this balance hardy creates between the presentations of Industry is way of suggesting that the fusion between nature and industry is symbiotic and thus in affect beneficial to both.

This displays Hardy's effective complexity within his attitude towards industrialisation and this may be because it is an accurate response of his

believes that despite that industrialisation is inevitable it is both positive and negative and will have a dual symbiotic impact of society, which is made apparent by his balance argument. Hardy also intricately uses the focalised theme of industrialisation in this chapter to again highlight the motif of social development. Tess is potentially used as an instrument by Hardy to distinguish clear opposing comparisons between the two conjunctions that is industry and the countryside.

For example while Tess in awe of the train, is described as a 'motionless' which is a direct opposition to the moving pace of the train. This is effective in the claim that whilst industry is forever evolving and inevitable to progression, the rural life is still, unmoving and highly limited. This is also enforced by Hardy's representation of Tess (which is symbolic for the countryside as one of 'no date or fashion' which is negative and highlights the contemporary progression made against the 'unsophisticated' life of the countryside.

Hardy's structure with the inclusion of industrial elements is also highly interesting. This is because in contrast to the beginning of the novel where Hardy incorporates no use of modern/industrial aspects, as the novel progresses and especially as Tess attains a higher social status due to her peaking relationship with Angel who represents modern thinking and way of life, modernisation becomes apparent.

This is symbolic of the fact that industrialisation is representative of higher social status and economic growth, business and essentially a means of production which is affiliated with the bourgeoisie. This view is further

enhanced by Tess's ignorance of modern life and her reference to the specific section of Londoners ' noble men and noble woman' who are at the heart of industry. This again suggests that modernisation is another form of referring class distinctions within society and particularly the Victorian era. This may suggest that Hardy's somewhat negative views on industrialisation may be for these implications on society. However it can also be noted that Industry (metaphorically used through the train) is used to connect these two opposing ways of life, therefore is a positive impact on society and this enforces the symbiotic view which was previously made.

In conclusion it is clear that Hardy intricately portrays and depicts the implications of industrialisation in various ways. This shows that his balanced and complex is representative of multiple people within both modern urban areas and the rural countryside. Also these balanced views may be that despite the fact that industry had not fully developed in the Victorian era, they were still showing both negative and positive implications of the world and one of which are inevitable,