**Tess of the D’Urbervilles – Critics Quotes**

* *"Angel abandons her, masking his prurient disgust at her sexual history with spurious Christian principles."* - **Mark Asquith**
* *"Victim of her own sexuality."* - **Ellen Rooney**
* *Tess - "Radically unreadable."* - **Ellen Rooney**
* *"It is both a seduction and a rape."* - **Ian Gregory**
* *"Perhaps one reason she seduces casual attention is that she never courts it."* - **Catherine MacKinnon**
* *"Cast out by a morally hypocritical society, Tess identifies most strongly with the natural world and it is here that Hardy's textual lyricism comes in to its own." -* **Elizabeth Days**
* *"Tess was a human being, of human passions (...) here all the ingredients for the blackest misery."* - **Andrew Lang (1982, for The New Review)**
* *"Feminist distinction between rape and intercourse... lies instead in the meaning of the act from the woman's point of view."* - **Catherine MacKinnon**
* *"She (Tess) is both the betrayed maid and the fallen woman, both the scapegoat and the tragic heroine complicities in her own downfall."* - **Kristin Brady**
* *Hardy's treatment of his characters is "blatantly non-stereotypical"* - **Linda Shires**
* *"By giving increased prominence to the villainy of both Alec D'Urberville and Angel Clare, Hardy was able to half suggest that Tess was more a passive victim of male aggression and idealization than an active participant in her own disastrous fate."* - **Kristen Brady**
* *"To read Alec as a rapist is grossly to underestimate him. Like Satan, the role he jestingly but also revealingly plays, he seeks not to pinion the body of his victim but to master her mind, to exploit her weakness."* - **James Hefferson**
* *"Generally, the heroine of romance must choose in some way between good and evil. Tess's choices are never so clear cut."* - **Kristen Brady**
* *"The question raised by the novel is this: what would a woman be if she were released from male oppression and allowed to be herself?"* - **Martin Seymour-Smith**
* *"Whatever happens to her, however cruel her identity, she has a clear sense of herself, and the strength to remain true to it. Which is more than can be said for either of the men whose passion is the instrument of her tragedy."* - **Jane Shilling**
* *"Hardy's insistence on her lineage transforms Tess in to a puppet through which her ancestors continue their barbarous lives."* - **Mark Asquith**
* *"Through his musing voice (Hardy) makes his presence steadily felt. He hovers and watches over Tess like a stricken father."* - **A. Alvarez**
* *"Landscape is continually brought to life, not for its own sake but, like a sounding board, in order to deepen and intensify whatever it is that Tess is experiencing."* - **A. Alvarez**
* *"A mere corpse drifting with the current to her end."* - **Thomas Hardy (1982)**
* *"It illustrates the ache of modernism."* - **Dale Kramer (for Cambridge uni - 1991)**
* *"Hardy's 'unflinching inscription of the inexorable forces that produced her as the seductive object of the discourses of man."* - **Ellen Rooney**
* *"Purity depends on passivity."* - **Ellen Rooney**
* *"The case for seduction decisively outweighs the case for rape."* - **James A.W.Hefferman**
* *"Tess has been born and nurtured in a village so remote and insular that it does not even feature on the map of Wessex."* - **Rob Worrall**
* *"Hardy's novel is like a court casein which all the material evidence is left out, and the jury (readers) rushed to judgement on the basis of the defendant's beauty and pathetic suffering."* - **Nancy Barrineau**
* *"The novel is chockfull of comparisons"* - **Peter J. Casagrande**
* *"Far from being a passive victim, Hess embodies a fierce impulse to self-determination against daunting, and ultimately insurmountable, odds”* - **Morgan (89)**