

**TRAITS OF MODERNISM IN
HARDY'S FEMALE PROTAGONISTS:
INSTINCTUAL VERSUS SOCIAL SELVES**



By:

SHAZIA GHULAM MOHAMMAD
Ph.D. Research Scholar

Supervised By:

PROF. DR. ABDUS SALAM

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & APPLIED
LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF PESHAWAR
(2012)**

**TRAITS OF MODERNISM IN
HARDY'S FEMALE PROTAGONISTS:
INSTINCTUAL VERSUS SOCIAL SELVES**



*Submitted to the Department of English & Applied Linguistics, University of
Peshawar in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

(2012)

Supervisor's Certificate

This is to certify that the work in this dissertation entitled “Traits of Modernism in Hardy's female Protagonists: Instinctual Versus Social Selves” has been carried out under my supervision by Ms. Shazia Ghulam Mohammad for submission in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in English Language & Literature.

Supervisor

Declaration

I hereby declare that I have carried out the research work contained in this thesis entitled “Traits of Modernism in Hardy's Female Protagonists: Instinctual Versus Social Selves” under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Abdus Salam Khalis. I also declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree elsewhere.

Ms. Shazia Ghulam Mohammad

To The Fond Memory of My Beloved Father

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all I thank Allah for giving me the perseverance and constancy to accomplish my research. I attribute my success to the endeavours of all those who have lent their generous support in the course of the completion of this project. I owe my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Abdus Salam Khalis who consented to supervise my research. Despite his ever growing commitments he served as a guiding star to steer me in the right direction. He played a vital role in crystallizing and consolidating my dispersed thoughts. His untiring hard work enabled me to sail through the stormy tides successfully to achieve my target while discovering the precious gems in the ocean of knowledge.

I take this opportunity of thanking the Department of English, University of Peshawar for facilitating me to have an access to the library, hence providing me the opportunity to benefit generously and liberally from the available sources. Zaiwar Khan, librarian at the Department of English, was kind enough to locate books and lend them unhesitatingly. I am grateful to Dr. Mujib Rahman, Chairman, Department of English and Applied Linguistics, University of Peshawar for never proving a hindrance in the progress of paper work. I earnestly record my appreciation for him who has always been considerate, kind and co-operative. I am indebted to my teachers particularly Dr. Shazia Sadaf who opened up a new horizon of knowledge and enlightenment. She took keen interest in my academic pursuits and remained genuinely concerned even when I would be immersed in my research.

I extend my warm and affectionate thanks to Dr. Ghazala Nizam for taking the burden off my mind when I would be under enormous stress. Being the principal of the College of Home Economics, University of Peshawar, she provided me as much relief as she could by recommending study leave unhesitatingly.

Thanks are also due to my family particularly my mother who, despite her failing health, lent her co-operation and consolation during hard times. My father was all enthusiastic about my research when I started it, but unfortunately he could not see the completion of it due to his sudden death. I lost not only an affectionate father but also my best friend. I wish he were alive to see my achievement today. My uncle, Dr. Ghulam Shabbir Shah, and brother, Saeed Shah never let me feel down and filled in the vacuum when going would get tough. The rest of my family, particularly my elder sister Shahla Hashmi, patiently put up with my terrible mood swings. I would like to acknowledge that my husband and in-laws stood by me in this tedious project without ever bothering me for which I have the deepest regard for them.

Abstract

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) — a versatile literary genius and one of the most celebrated English novelists— has subtly combined the traditional heritage of the Victorian era with modern literary trends, linking the two centuries divided by conflicting schools of thought. Though having created memorable scenes, settings and unique places, his prime focus is on inner human sensibilities. Among humans, it is the fair sex which gets more share of his attention. His sensitive mind dwells on women and the issues faced by them due to their anatomical marginalization. Unlike his Victorian contemporaries who treated the mental and emotional complexities of women in accordance with the typical and Victorian perception of their nature and character, Hardy has made a difference by deviating significantly. The most instrumental form of this deviation is his anticipation of the ways in which women would be perceived and portrayed in the coming century epitomized by the term “Modernism”.

My research capitalizes on the aforementioned point and contends that, despite being placed in an inevitably Victorian setting, Hardy’s major female characters are neither strictly the product of his age nor do they typically correspond to the standards and sensitivities of the same. They are rather more akin in feeling and thought to the revolting and emancipated females of the 20th century modernistic tradition. Some of his female characters—particularly Eustacia, Bathsheba, Sue and Tess—think and behave in ways so shockingly queer for the Victorian readership that Hardy had to face tremendous

censorship for having created them as such. They, however, came to be better understood and appreciated during the second half of the 20th century as they were found corresponding to the image of the New Woman or the role of women as redefined by Modernism. It was observed that they could be more variedly approached by the emerging standards of psychoanalytical theories rather than the stereotypical critical approaches generically applied to nineteenth century fictional characters. Their complex psychic constitution proves the fact that their actions are motivated by the co-existence of conflicting demands. They strive to achieve fulfillment in an environment which is not conducive for self-realization and emotional autonomy. On the one hand too defiant to surrender while on the other hand too fragile to succeed, they have to suffer multiple spiritual, emotional and psychological crises. Once in crisis, they find it impossible to escape, as all external agents seem to have conspired against them. Every other Tess somewhere shouts in desperation 'once victim, always victim' or feels that 'Bygones would never be complete bygones till she was a bygone herself'; and that holds true for every woman irrespective of temporal and spatial constraints. Hence, it has been argued that, notwithstanding the role of extraneous elements like Nature, Providence and society in facilitating the downfall of these rare individuals, the roots of their tragic dooms can be traced to the devastating inner conflict caused by their complex psyches with heterogeneous constituents. Their impulsive quest for self-realization directly clashes with their socially acceptable frames of behaviour, culminating in tragedies which may be ethically justifiable but which compel the readers to sympathize with the romantically sublime victims.

List of Contents

Chapter	Title	Page
	Acknowledgements	i
	Abstract	iii
	List of Contents	v
	Abbreviations	vi
Chapter I:	Introduction	1
Chapter II:	Literature Review	13
Chapter III:	The Changing Concept of ‘Self’ in Psychoanalytic and Literary Perspective	33
Chapter IV:	“Angel-in-the-House”: Image of Women in Victorian Society and Fiction	56
Chapter V:	Seductive Eves: Image of Women in Hardy’s Fiction	82
Chapter VI:	Instinctual Versus Ethical Selves in Hardy’s Female Protagonists	110
Chapter VII:	Quest for Self in Hardy’s Female Protagonists	149
Chapter VIII:	Hardy’s Affinity to Modern Writers in Depiction of Women	192
Chapter IX:	Conclusion	230
	Works Cited	231

Abbreviations

FFMC	<i>Far From the Madding Crowd</i>
RN	<i>The Return of the Native</i>
ToD	<i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>
Jude	<i>Jude the Obscure</i>
MC	<i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i>
WL	<i>The Woodlanders</i>
DR	<i>Desperate Remedies</i>

Chapter I

Introduction

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) is one of the most read and deeply appreciated literary figures of the Victorian era. He contributed to the treasure of English literature in multiple capacities: as a poet, as a novelist and as a dramatist. He chiefly aspired to be a poet, but was destined to be remembered for his novels. Initially, his fiction was scrutinized in the Victorian perspectives, but the emergence of psychoanalysis¹ has brought a radical shift in the interpretation of his texts. It has led us to exploring new avenues of interest in his works by tracing therein the elements of self, identity, desire, death drive and subject-object theory² etc. Such a modernist evaluation of Hardy's art definitely gives us a deep insight into the psychic constitution of his characters, especially female protagonists.

It has always been an important preoccupation of great minds in art and literature to depict females as assertive and autonomous —as counterparts of men with equal human status; and emotionally and psychologically even more complicated and interesting. This approach got more currency in the nineteenth century when an unprecedented tendency of projecting liberality of thought and feeling questioned almost all social and moral myths. Hardy was one of the most prominent writers of the age who took up this issue. His unusual fascination with women and his unparalleled understanding of their

emotional constitution made him an iconic forerunner of the feminist fiction writers of the succeeding age.

Born in the early Victorian age and living till the flourishing of twentieth century modernism, Thomas Hardy emerged as a transitional literary figure, with one foot deeply rooted in the Victorian conventions and the other firmly fixed in the modern era of the twentieth century. When authors like Dickens, Trollope, Thackeray, Meredith and George Eliot were preoccupied with the social and moral issues faced and debated by the Victorian public, Hardy primarily concerned himself with the individual in terms of his inner self and his emotional constitution. The emergence of psychoanalysis by the turn of the century and the publication of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) further shifted focus from outer world to the inner cast of soul, laying Hardy's narrative texts and characters bare for psychological probing. Hardy's intrinsic tendency of paying special attention to women encouraged him to look at French realists with approbation, advocating liberal feminism in his attitude towards women and morality. Not only his memorable female characters outnumber the male ones, they have also been assigned unparalleled pathos and sublimity. Hardy's presentation of women is unusual and unique, notwithstanding their being looked upon by some critics as 'always of the same order'³ in their constitution—conventional, unattractive, weak and impassionate. Hardy's women like Tess in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Sue in *Jude the Obscure*, Eustacia in *The Return of the Native* and Bathsheba in *Far from the Madding Crowd* are caught in the dilemma of social identity and subjective identity, fighting against all odds to establish their individuality.

The discrepancy between what Hardy's heroines think themselves to be and what they are for the others in the society, leads to a conflict difficult to resolve.

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, there was a growing tendency of treating Woman as a tool for experimentation in sexual ideology, amplifying the theme of sex in line with the literary trends of New Woman Fiction. Already influenced by the liberal sexual philosophy of George Moore, Hardy availed the opportunity for glamourizing the fulfillment dimension of sexual interaction, irrespective of its being validated or otherwise by the formal institution of marriage. He attacked the Victorian conventions and projected the theme of sexuality in 'Candour in English Fiction'⁴ in 1890, despite the unfavourable public response and censorship from publishers and editors. Hardy showed moral courage to articulate his views frankly on marriage, divorce and sexuality by rejecting preconceived notions of marriage in *Jude the Obscure*, the publication of which evoked bitter reaction from the Victorian public. As a consequence, it was burnt by the Bishop of Wakefield⁵—the response which *Lady Chatterley's Lover* evoked in the twentieth century. Furthermore, Hardy shocked his Victorian readers by calling Tess 'A Pure Woman' who was fit to be called 'A Fallen Woman' as per the Victorian standards. It is primarily by virtue of such challenging assertions that Hardy is called progressive in conception, bridging the gap between the conventional women of the nineteenth century and the modern ones of the twentieth century by portraying a gallery of neurotic and passionate females.

This research analyzes Hardy's contribution as a literary feminist and attempts to explore the peculiar traits of Hardy's females and their role in paving the way for modernist depiction of complex women. Hardy provided solid foundations for the advocates of Feminist Movement in 1960's and 1970's by portraying women having 'modern nerves' with 'primitive feelings' in an ethic-conscious Victorian culture. Their resilience in the face of suffering lends them tragic dimensions. The more they suffer, the more resistant they become to social censure. The cause of their destruction is too much insistence on self-assertion or self-negation. Their interests are in direct clash with social norms. They are conditioned by the society and it is primarily the society which shapes their attitude. Social laws exist to regulate human conduct but when they threaten human autonomy, self-assertion becomes indispensable. It is here that the 'other' intervenes when social laws disrupt the natural harmony of an individual. It may be the 'other' inside an individual or in the guise of the society that assumes a patriarchal role. It may be in the form of a human being or a set of beliefs, values, moral scruples, code of ethics etc. In all these capacities, the 'other' has the potential to thwart the hopes of aspiring individuals. From this point of view, Hardy's heroines are the individuals who struggle for having a better understanding of the 'self'; but the obstruction they face is the society which does not sanction their self-assertion or absolute dissolution. They aspire not only for freedom of thought and expression, but also for a free choice of partner and an absolute emancipation from sexual hypocrisy—essential requisites for a healthy social attitude.

Hardy's art shows fragmentation of self: a psychoanalytical trait expanding and deepening with the maturity of his art. Hence, we witness a striking progress in his depiction of women—from Cytherea to Sue Bridehead. This growth shows Hardy's intellectual maturity and progression towards liberalism. The contempt in which Hardy's women⁶ hold a sacred ideal like religion demonstrates the seeds of revolt and rejection in Hardy's female characters and variedly establishes them as fore-runners for the modern feminist approach towards emancipation of women both in thought and action. From this angle our current discussion intends to analyze Hardy's major female protagonists validly represented by Tess in *Tess of the D'Urberville*, Sue in *Jude the Obscure*, Bathsheba in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, and Eustacia in *The Return of the Native* with casual references to Elfrida in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and Cytherea in *Desperate Remedies*. Nevertheless, we cannot afford to altogether overlook the role played by some obviously auxiliary but important females like Miss Aldclyffe, Grace Melbury, Mrs. Charmond, Marty South, Elizabeth-Jane, Lucetta and Thomasin.

Tess, Sue and Eustacia are the supreme examples of the division between the body and the reason. This split is the root cause of their inner conflict. There is a tug of war between the intellectual quest and the sensual yearning. They are torn between social obligations and emotional inclinations that are subjective in nature. They do not consider child-bearing or looking after their husbands as the prime objective of their lives. They are unwilling to play the roles prefigured for them. They strive for self-realization and self-fulfillment, rather than fitting in the stereotypical image of the ideal womanhood. Hence, they

provide more valid and authentic models for contending our point than the rest of Hardy's females, and are therefore, more elaborately examined.

The focal questions which will provide the foundation for discussion are these: Upto what extent do Hardy's women conform to the norms and standards set by the Victorian society? What are the modes and methods of their rejection and rebellion, and how does their deviation reflect the modern spirit of projecting female emancipation in literary criticism? As evident from the title, we have to trace the roots of modernism—both explicit and implicit—in Hardy's female characters. To get a validly reflective view of these mostly peculiar females, to encompass their different varieties—primitive, modern and amalgamation of both—we have to go deep into their souls and unravel the mystery of their objective and subjective identities. Taking the issue of self-negation and self-fulfillment as the foundation of discussion, this research attempts to establish that Hardy's heroines serve as a link between conventional approach to women in the Victorian society and modern conception of women in the twentieth century and late.

As such, this thesis inherently involves a psychoanalytical approach towards the characters in question. However, it needs to be clarified at the outset that psychoanalytical evaluation of Hardy's female characters is neither its central theme nor its point of originality. Our hypothesis is rather based on the conviction that Hardy's female protagonists, though born in a morally conscious society, anticipate modern women. They stand as a vital link between traditional and modern conception of women. They represent a set of tendencies that deviate from the norms or standards set by the Victorian

society. While exploring modern traits in Hardy's female protagonists, the term 'modern' is not used in the layman's sense; rather it carries literary connotations associated with the term 'modernism' in the sense of literary theories. Due to its inherently complex nature, the term can be better elucidated rather than defined. However, if a working definition is necessary, we may take the following one from Wikipedia. "More specifically, the term describes the modernist movement in the arts, its set of cultural tendencies and associated cultural movements, originally arising from wide-scale and far-reaching changes to Western society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries."⁷

The following Chapter—Chapter II of the thesis—contains review of relevant literature, starting from Hardy's lifetime upto the present day. It encompasses important and relevant critical comments and reviews on Hardy's art with special reference to his female characters. Majority of Hardy's critics have aligned him either with feminists or misogynists, taking into account his conflicting responses depending upon his fluctuating moods. Besides these two conflicting schools of Hardy's critics, the discussion also includes those who believe Hardy's depiction of females to be ambivalent.

Chapter III attempts to redefine modernism in the specific sense with the exposition of the concept of 'Self'. This chapter focuses on the fundamental issue of the concept of 'self' as projected by iconic psychoanalysts like Freud and Lacan and accordingly applied to the works of great literary authors like Shakespeare, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence and Graham Greene etc.

Chapter IV focuses on the image of woman in the society and literature of the Victorian era. It critically examines the ways Woman was thought of and treated in the patriarchal Victorian society and the image predominately assigned to her in literary works. Moreover, it highlights the notion of separate spheres of thought, feeling and activity for men and women prevalent in the Victorian culture and the tendency among literary authors to uphold the sacredness of domestic ideology by defining virtuous, pure and spiritualized woman as 'Doll'(Curtis 103) and angel-in-the-house.

Chapter V examines Hardy's image of women and elaborates the idiosyncrasies of his female characters, particularly those dimensions of their personalities which differentiate them from women in the works of other writers of the Victorian age. It enumerates the reasons that account for developing a particular kind of women's image in Hardy's mind. Their peculiarities, eccentricities, and deviation from the established norms of society provide a solid foundation for further discussion and analysis. Along with identifying three types of women in his fiction and elaborating on their peculiarities, it touches upon Hardy's men as counterfoils to highlight the revolt, resilience and strength of his extraordinary femme fatale who always contribute enormously in bringing about the downfall and utter destruction of men.

Chapter VI is the core section, containing the pivotal point of the discussion as it attempts to expand what has already been established in Chapter V. The conflict between the ethical and the instinctual inclinations as a consequence of opposite psychic forces assumes a special significance with regard to

Hardy's female protagonists. The split between the 'I' and the 'me' is emphasized either by juxtaposing two women of contradictory natures together, or the conflict has been externalized by making male characters stand for instinctual versus ethical in women. One stands for social propriety and the other for instinctive inclinations. The female characters with no moral scruples and psychological complexities are also spotlighted and discussed with a cursory glance over their characters to highlight the comparison between the two categories under discussion. Their notions of love, marriage, sex and religion are shown in marked contrast with the ones who are torn by inner conflicts and are in a moral dilemma.

Chapter VII further substantiates the thesis statement as a continuation of the argument initiated in Chapter VI. It contends that Hardy's heroines in their 'quest for self' undertake the journey which culminates in the evolution of modern women. They pass through the excruciating experiences of life to establish their individualities. Tess plays the role of a daughter, mother, sister and wife. This is the social identity 'I' she is known for. Her vital self 'me' lies somewhere in the secret recesses of her unconscious. She has two options: either accepting the dictates of instincts or abiding by social norms. Self fulfillment is possible only at the cost of one of these two. This Chapter establishes that the acceptance of the former promises self-fulfillment, realization of her vital 'self' at the cost of being an outcast; and conforming to the latter is bound to annihilate her vital 'self', the 'self' and identity she desperately wants to establish. Sue's, Bathsheba's and Eustacia's quest for self-fulfillment is also explored in detail. Moreover, the role that

representatives of patriarchy play in negating their subjective identity by becoming the 'Other' is also examined. The conflict that springs from within expands itself beyond the 'self' to a war between 'self' and 'society'. It attains a colossal magnitude when the limited forces of an individual are brought in combat with social laws.

Chapter VIII establishes Hardy's affinity with modern authors in the techniques he employs in the delineation of his female protagonists. Furthermore, it traces certain other modern tendencies in his characters in general, and women in particular. In support of the thesis statement, parallels are drawn between Hardy and other literary figures, hence underlining his indirect contribution to modern psychoanalytic theories of Freud and Carl Jung.

Chapter Nine concludes the whole discussion and highlights the significant points elaborated in the course of this research. It also states the limitations of the research and its potentials for becoming a foundation for further research on Hardy.

Notes

¹ Ruth Williams, Linda .*Critical Desire: Psychoanalysis and the Literary Subject* .p-6

The term was used by Freud in 1896 to describe those processes which could unravel the mystery of the unconscious by allowing the analyst to probe into it through free association which otherwise is inaccessible.

² From preface to *Literature and Psychoanalysis: Intertextual Readings*. (listed)

The psychoanalytic concepts like desire , the object , abjection , the uncanny , the death drive were engendered by 'Freudian revolution' to describe the workings of the unconscious.

³ From introduction to Penny Boumelha's *Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form*. Boumelha quotes many critics and reviewers holding conflicting opinions regarding Hardy's women.

⁴ *Celebrating Thomas Hardy: Insights and Appreciation*. p-106

In 1890s, 'prostitute themes' became popular in England due to the influence of the French realist, Zola. Hardy supported George Moore's campaign of abolishing the 'doll' of English fiction or stereotypical image of woman by writing 'Candour in English Fiction' in which he emphasized frankness about sexual matters and favoured the presentation of realistic and honest picture of life as it is. Arguing against the happy endings of novels, he appreciated Greek models who sincerely presented life even in its tragic aspect. For further detail consult Simon Curtis's critical essay "Hardy, George Moore and the 'Doll' of English Fiction". p-103-113.

⁵ From A.Alvarez's essay 'Jude the Obscure'.p-113 (listed)

⁶ Evidences from the text of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *The Return of the Native* are quoted here though discussed in detail in the succeeding chapters of the thesis. After being seduced by Alec, Tess is made to realize her mistake by an artisan who paints on the stile the Holy inscriptions in red colour 'THY, DAMNATION, SLUMBERETH, NOT' and 'THOU, SHALT, NOT, COMMIT' which she regards with contempt 'Pooh! I don't believe God said such things.' She thinks that the inscriptions are simply horrible and the words are 'Crushing! killing'. p. 94-96

Tess baptizes her illegitimate baby herself rather than calling the parson to do his job and when her baby dies, she does not have misgivings on his account. Her reasoning faculty aids her to resolve the dilemma; she thinks that if baptism falls short of the required accuracy set by Providence then she does not care a fig for heaven lost by it. Moreover, she insists the

Vicar to give the baby a Christian burial and sensing his reluctance to do so, she speaks profanely that she will never go to the church. p. 113

Eustacia ridicules religious practices by not observing them on proper days at appropriate times, but at her sweet will. The evidence of it is that she reads the Bible on a week day and sings a psalm on Saturday nights. On Sundays when everything is at rest, she exhausts herself by arranging wardrobes while humming the country ballads. She rejects religious observances when it is proper time and day to follow them.

⁷ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modernism>

Chapter II

Literature Review

Thomas Hardy's literary position regarding women is believed to be controversial when analyzed in modernist perspective of the twentieth century criticism. One school acknowledges his contribution to women's cause by placing him with those humane novelists whose empathy with women qualify them to be called feminists; the other treats him with disapprobation for his latent misogyny. Consequently, there emerges a third school of critics in whose opinion Hardy may be ambivalent on the women question due to his enigmatic nature and wavering mental make-up. In general assumption, Hardy's novels did not explicitly advocate any radical change in the then existing status of women, nor is he ranked among active suffragettes. Still mostly he is associated with feminists due to his sympathy with women folk. Notwithstanding the above-mentioned diverse critical opinions, his exceptional focus on women has evoked much debate among critics and literary circles.

Some critics regard Hardy's fiction to be retaliatory while others associate it, particularly *Jude the Obscure* with New Woman novels due to certain characteristics that are exclusively New Woman Fiction's domain. New Woman Fiction lays emphasis on anti-marriage notions and offers a little bit of independence to women and passionlessness is considered New Woman's dominating characteristic. In order to analyze Hardy's female characters in

their complex mental constitution, views of different critics are recounted who have focused entirely on Hardy's women and have explored their intricacies. Keeping in mind Hardy's chief concern, it is essential to take into consideration those reviewers and critics who comment on Hardy's affinity with modern authors in the depiction of women.

Havelock Ellis (1883) in his Westminster Review of 'Thomas Hardy's Novels', analyzes Hardy's women whose force lies in their simplicity, egotism and instinct. He creates a gallery of interesting and irresistible women. They are guided by instincts which save them from being altogether bad. They are 'Undines of the earth'(106) and 'untamed children of Nature'(107). Ellis maintains that they are egoistic, instinct-led creatures in a particular set of circumstances. Their actions do not sprout from moral impetus; rather it is their instinctive response.

D. F. Hannigan (1892) writes in Westminster Review, published in *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage*, that Mr. Hardy likes ideal women or at least idealized types and there is something chivalric in his portrayal of women. Furthermore, they are drawn essentially with feminine charm unlike 'advanced women'. Hannigan poses a question whether such 'entrancingly, fascinating creatures' (272) as those portrayed by Hardy actually exist? We hardly come across a woman who is commonplace and that is why they have charismatic, fatal attraction which men cannot resist; hence they are destroyed.

Margaret Oliphant (1896), in her review "The Anti-Marriage League" published in Blackwood's Magazine, condemns Hardy for creating a woman

doubly fallen from moral standards of his time. She holds Hardy's women responsible for the annihilation of men. They are portrayed as temptresses, seductresses who play havoc with men's lives and reduce them to nothing. Mrs. Oliphant finds Hardy's attack on the institution of marriage as shocking because he thinks that it diminishes prospects of happiness between two individuals who could have been quite happier otherwise. Hardy's men are victimized and lose the only chance of their domination by relegating their power to inferior beings. She criticizes Hardy who seems to be advocating sex or 'free love' outside marital relationship (256-258).

Edward Wright (1904) in Quarterly Review of "The Novels of Thomas Hardy", published in *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage*, considers Hardy's heroines as 'coquettes' who remain 'indifferent to the deep inarticulate devotion' (349-350) of their suitors, and fall prey to fickle men and are exploited. Wright maintains that despite Hardy's ungenerous view of women, they are nobly conceived. His heroes lack vitality of life and overwhelming passion while heroines are passionate, energetic, alluring and their wayward ways serve as means to destruction.

H. C. Duffin (1916) appreciates Hardy's understanding of women and calls him 'a specialist in women' (235). In *Thomas Hardy: The Wessex Novels*, he offers an illuminating study on Hardy's art, plot and characters with valuable insights into his view of God, man, society and life in general. The Chapter entitled 'Hardy's Women: Hardy's View of Woman' is closely related to the subject of my research as it deals with the types and images of women in which Hardy showed keen interest, particularly, Tess—with 'touch of

animalism in her flesh'(220); Sue, an intellectual woman 'merely dabbling in one of the many subtleties of modern sex-relations'(222); Eustacia 'whose flesh glorious and exultant, has absorbed her soul, and has blood-red passions of its own' (226). 'All these women stand out as clear and distinct from each other as primary colours'(234). According to Duffin, Hardy's male characters do not show subtlety and sublimity with the exception of Jude and Clare, while he shows his mastery in the delineation of females. He seems to have kept balance between his portrayal of men and women, yet he is more inclined to the latter (235).

Lionel Johnson (1923) gives an enlightening account of peculiarities of Thomas Hardy's art. In the Chapter entitled 'Characters of Men and Women', a categorical classification of Hardy's men and women enables readers to compare and contrast them with one another. Johnson appreciates Hardy's unique, versatile and consistent way of presenting characters: "[H]is characters are subtly coloured, or chemically compounded, by the idiosyncrasies of his psychological analysis" (170). Johnson takes into account diverse opinions of critics on Hardy's women in order to differentiate the passionate and perverse natures of Eustacia, Bathsheba, Lucetta, Felice Charmond and Elfride from the stable and substantial ones like Elizabeth-Jane, Thomasin and Marty South. 'Much that at first offends us as a representation of women, almost insulting, proves on reflection to be a tribute to their honesty' (197).

Samuel C. Chew (1928) discusses in detail the rustics of the Wessex Novels in *Thomas Hardy: Poet and Novelist*. He thinks Hardy unconventional in his views on love, marriage and divorce and assumes that 'Mis-mating' (131) is

the root cause of failures in marital relationships. He interprets Hardy's view of love and marriage by differentiating one from the other. According to Chew, Hardy considers love as a culmination of sexual desire, and marriage as an institution based on mutual affections and common pursuits: 'On the whole, however, Hardy's attitude towards women is unfavourable; his opinion of them is bitter. They have many good qualities of heart, but they are fickle and vain, insincere, conscienceless, and seductive. Almost all are passionate, and passion leads invariably to grief' (133). He projects the fact that child bearing has to be done by women, whose task is to propagate, and men's task is to succumb to this instinctive provocation of women subduing their reasoning faculty. Children are usually off the stage: 'The omission is the more remarkable in that the function of child-bearing is the central idea in Hardy's view of women' (134).

Lascelles Abercrombie (1935), in *Thomas Hardy: A Critical Study*, aims to identify weakness or some inherent instinct that brings about annihilation in Hardy's characters. His women are disturbing and sinister agents, though it is their fate rather than fault to suffer (24). Ideal women assert themselves rather than be passed as 'non-entities' (25).

D. H. Lawrence (1936) in his widely acknowledged "From Study of Thomas Hardy", published in *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence*, studies Hardy's characters in detail and concludes that the tragedy of his characters lies in their being unusual and individualistic. He infers that those who are passionate and have turbulence in their constitution face destruction while average ones, who identify themselves with the community, survive.

Lawrence equates their tragic dimensions with the unsurpassed tragic characteristics of Shakespeare's heroes. They are at war with the community than God. He argues that they struggle to come into being and therein lies the tragedy. Those who break the boundaries of conventions are doomed due to the male and female principles at work in their constitution.

Leanard W. Deen (1960) analyzes Hardy's femme fatale Eustacia in 'Heroism and Pathos in *The Return of the Native*' to unravel the mystery lying at the heart of her tragedy. Deen discovers in Eustacia's Promethean rebelliousness, self-destructiveness and isolation her inability to bridge the gulf between her inner chaotic world and the outer world of commonality. 'The action of Hardy's tragedies is almost always the doomed struggle against isolation—the struggle towards a common world' (130).

Albert J. Guerard (1963) gives a genealogy of Hardy's younger women. He presents young women or girls that populate Hardy's fictive world. They are unpredictable and act on 'radically feminine impulse' (70) due to which they are entrapped while men are passive and lack virility. Some women are hedonists, some are gifted with endurance and patience while others are born with agitated souls (65). Guerard finds six major female characters of Hardy as highly individualized: 'Elfride, nervous and evasive; Bathsheba, curiously masculine and feminine; the wild, proud, and unreconciled Eustacia, the tender and "pure" Tess; the tormented yet fun loving Sue; and Arabella, the female animal' (70). Stern moralists like Angel or pedantic Phillotson are set against these interesting and fascinating heroines.

Tony Tanner (1968) provides illuminating estimation of Tess in 'Colour and Movement in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*'. I have cited this source in order to assess the role of colour in the evaluation of Tess as a woman in whose life the colour of blood determines her sensuality as well as death. Tanner traces its significance and perceives—from first to last— its impact in determining Tess's destiny.

Ian Gregor (1974) in *The Great Web: The Form of Hardy's Major Fiction* presents an enlightening commentary on Hardy's six major novels. They are described as 'The Creation of Wessex': *Far from the Madding Crowd*; 'Landscape with Figures': *The Return of the Native*; 'A Man and his History': *The Mayor of Casterbridge*; 'The Great Web': *The Woodlanders*; 'Poor Wounded Name': *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, 'An End and a Beginning': *Jude the Obscure*. Gregor analyzes the form and focuses on characters with splintered consciousness as a consequence of their relation to environment. Moreover, he probes into the reasons for the split in their consciousness. Gregor's interpretation of *The Return of the Native* as 'the dialogue of the mind with itself' in Arnold's phrase (81) and *The Mayor of Casterbridge* as 'a mute self-recognition, taking place within an individual consciousness totally divided against itself'(113) are of particular interest. 'The temptations of Sue, the endurance of Marty, the troubled consciousness of Grace come together and find a fresh definition in Tess' (178). Hardy perceives consciousness emerging out of chaos and in perpetual 'conflict with itself and the environment'(ibid).

Virginia R. Hyman (1975) in *Ethical Perspective in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* affiliates Hardy with ethical evolutionists in the delineation of his characters. Hardy, incapable to produce ideal types, portrays his characters as ‘modern types’. Though intellectually advanced, they are “‘shaded by limitations’ due to moral timidity” (34). Sue and Eustacia are portrayed as egotists rather than altruists, who in their evolution of consciousness pass from theological to metaphysical stage, yet do not reach sociological stage to become altogether ethical. They do not have fellow-feeling of compassion to qualify them for being morally superior. It is their desire to be absolutely free and autonomous to grab the happiness which brings about destruction of these characters. These female characters represent various stages of the ‘struggle for freedom’ (32).

Gail Cunningham (1978) in *The New Woman and the Victorian Novel* offers some interesting observations on Hardy’s men and women in his evaluation of three novels—*Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, *Jude the Obscure* and *The Woodlanders*. Cunningham identifies some characteristics, which align Hardy’s women with New Woman. He believes that Sue and Grace particularly voice Hardy’s anti-marriage notions and his views on divorce law. Cunningham takes into consideration some reviewers for whom Hardy’s women are embodiments of early modern feminism, for others they are the bearers of typical feminine ideal. A German reviewer considers Sue ‘the woman of the feminist movement’ (104) whom Hardy himself thinks ‘as a distinctively modern product’ (118). According to Cunningham, Hardy’s men pursue irresistible and fascinating women by whom they are rejected. Their

aloofness, evasiveness lend them gravitational force which men find difficult to resist. Cunningham condemns Hardy's heroines 'for the careless exercise of sexual power which enslaves worthy men,...'(88).

John Bayley (1978) in "An Essay on Hardy" evaluates Hardy's narrative to determine his stance with respect to his characters from whom he distances himself with objective impersonality, though the reader is quick to perceive his identification with them despite his claims to the contrary. He believes that Hardy's consciousness and emotional commitment to his characters lends them exuberance and vitality. He projects the fact that Hardy combines objective reality and his own subjective consciousness in such a way that the narrative moves in the desired direction. This consciousness becomes an effective vehicle to convey his views: 'True sensitivity, wholly familiar with the author's own, is in Hardy's fiction the prerogative of women' (178).

James Gibson (1980) in "Hardy and His Readers" examines Hardy's novels and poetry to determine the element of sexuality, particularly, in his description of women. This aspect can be traced in his early as well as later novels—from *Desperate Remedies* to *Jude the Obscure*. Gibson thinks that the obsessive preoccupation to deal with the man-woman relationship in sexual terms, puts Hardy into a perpetual trouble by making him the target of public assault, particularly that of reviewers. In order to cope with the problem of censorship and Victorian reader's susceptibilities, his narrative abounds with suggestive erotic imagery evoking sensual responses.

Roger Robinson (1980) in “Hardy and Darwin” discusses Darwin’s tremendous influence on Hardy and his works which Hardy reveals through unrelenting ‘struggle of his characters for survival’ (136). Hardy records a response to Darwinism by his obsessive preoccupation with the evolution of consciousness, which brings pain and suffering in his individuals particularly those with ‘over evolved sensitivity’ (139). Robinson does not undermine the other two factors—environment and heredity— which determine the destiny of those who claim their individualities by self-assertion. Hardy’s allegiance to Darwin and his scientific theories is perceptible in his works.

Penny Boumelha (1982) in *Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form*, explores the complex nature of Hardy’s females in the light of sexual ideology and points out certain contradictions inherent in them. Boumelha takes into account the modes of narration in which female characters are drawn in *The Return of the Native*, *The Woodlanders*, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. The Chapters bearing the headings “Sexual ideology and the Nature of Woman” and “Women and the New Fiction” are of special relevance to my research. She enumerates the characteristics of New Women (1880-1900) to show their points of similarities and dissimilarities from Hardy’s women. Boumelha believes that the actual dilemma of Hardy’s females is not the complexity of their psyche, or their confrontation with established social norms; it lies in their denial to be reduced to an ideology of womanhood (7). She argues that the tragedy of Hardy’s woman engenders from her ‘sexual nature’ while man’s from ‘intellectual ideals and ideological pressures’ (140) with the exception of Jude.

Elizabeth Langland (1984) in 'Society and Self in George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and Lawrence' examines the influence of society on individual lives: 'They present the poignant recognition that humans need to define themselves in a community, even if those definitions threaten to limit or destroy individual's potential' (123). In her opinion, social matrix serves as a vital means for internal self-fulfillment of extraordinary individuals who struggle to confront the social norms by remaining within their limitations (82). Langland elucidates that the persistent tussle between the natural and acquired social values presents a dilemma due to which Hardy's protagonists can be seen 'as loci for conflict' (82). Langland's analysis of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* reflects the constructive as well as destructive role of the society and its values on rare individuals. For them, there is a possibility of achieving satisfaction in transcending the immediate environmental laws for establishing the autonomy of self in relation to society.

Pamela L. Jekel (1986) in *Thomas Hardy's Heroines: A Chorus of Priorities* analyzes Hardy's unusual preoccupation with women and attributes it to autobiographical influences in his life. The Chapter entitled "The Women in Thomas Hardy's Life" particularly focuses on the women who inspired him in order to enable the reader to determine his literary feminism: 'Hardy's most constant emotional pattern was to be always attracted to lively, independent, and beautiful women who were, for some reason or another, unavailable to him' (15). Jekel explores the autobiographical influences due to which Hardy is committed and devoted to the delineation of his female characters in their real and natural colour.

Peter J. Casagrande (1987) in *Hardy's Influence on the Modern Novel* establishes Hardy's affinity with a modern novelist like D. H. Lawrence. In the Chapter titled "Now it Remains: Hardy and D. H. Lawrence", he finds in Hardy's characters prototypes for D. H. Lawrence's characters who are indebted to their predecessors in many respects. Casagrande finds parallels between Tess and Ursula; Sue and Gudrun; Alec and Arabella and Clym and Paul. While comparing Tess and Ursula— he highlights their inclination for Nature; their love for plants, animals and men: 'If Ursula can be seen as a Tess without shame, Gudrun is a Sue without guilt, a Sue one might say, with all the selfish instinct of an Arabella and none of the vulgarity'(55). Casagrande directs the reader to discern the affinities between Clym's filial devotion to Mrs. Yeobright and Paul's dilemma in idolizing Mrs. Morel in *Sons and Lovers*.

Donald Gutierrez (1987) evaluates *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in "Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*: The Self in Tragic Love" by glossing over the confession scene. Gutierrez considers this point pivotal as it triggers a movement towards claiming selfhood. He appreciates her immense capacity to bear the unbearable despite the all-pervading sense of cause and effect that overshadows Tess's prospects. Her over-evolved sensitivity to the objective and subjective world is presented through her identification with Nature. 'Tess is remarkable for its "portrait" in early modern literature of a tragic heroine whose essential being is indeed the sameness or integrity of her self, despite its undergoing a series of shocks, violence, and social and family pressures that would disfigure or even destroy a lesser person' (29-30). It is essentially a

novel about 'self' weighed down by the social pressures and callousness of less sensitive beings.

Rosemarie Morgan (1988), a famous critic of Thomas Hardy, applauds the self determination, perseverance, defiance and unyielding spirit of Hardy's women in *Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy*. She probes deep into their psycho-erotic drives and notes that Hardy's 'humanly imperfect, unconventional, strong, sexually vital, risk-taking rebels' (155) stir severe criticism. Morgan argues that Hardy empowers them to fight against the prescriptive roles. Conscious of their psycho-erotic drives, they live out their lives in the physical world of Nature. They seek out life of sensation which is invaded by the dominant male attitudes.

Ann L. Ardis (1990) in "Erotomania" takes into account reviews pertinent to analyzing Hardy's novels in the light of New Woman Fiction and perceives diversity in 'The Fiction of Sexuality'. In order to prove the point, she takes into consideration Mrs. Oliphant's virulent criticism of Hardy's novels; particularly, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. Ardis argues in favour of New Woman Fiction unlike Mrs. Oliphant who finds Tess and Sue as representatives of New Woman Novels in which, to deal with sexuality has been the sole purpose of the author. Furthermore, Ardis criticizes Zola, under whose influence this sort of literature flourished, and Grant Allen's *The Woman Who Did* from which Hardy is supposed to have taken inspiration in the delineation of these female protagonists.

Kristin Brady (1993) in her critical essay “Textual Hysteria: Hardy’s Narrator on Women”, evaluates Hardy’s women and identifies their inconsistencies and contradictory natures with the narrator’s own ambivalence: “While challenging courtship rituals that privilege virginity and deny women’s sexual responses, Hardy’s narrators persist in constructing and interpreting female characters according to standard notions about woman’s weakness, inconstancy, and tendency to hysteria” (Brady 89). In her opinion, Hardy’s texts exhibit narrator’s intense anxiety in terms of visual descriptions of female characters. Brady’s analysis of Sue in the light of New Woman Fiction to determine her behaviour emphatically proves her to be unstable, hysterical and pathological. In her later essay “Thomas Hardy and Matters of Gender”(1999), she describes the critical reviews on Hardy’s narrative texts. In the light of those reviews, she establishes Hardy’s stance as unstable whose fiction exhibits a complex struggle for power based on gender dynamics and his ‘instinct- led’(95) women create ‘a complex combination of arousal and anxiety, of pleasure and unpleasure’ (103).

Judith Mitchell (1994) regards Hardy’s stance as ambivalent on the issue of gender dynamics, and thinks that his texts pose a challenge to feminist as well as sexist assumptions. In the Chapter entitled “Thomas Hardy”, Mitchell argues that Hardy presents his heroines as objects of desire rather than subjects with erotic urges. Moreover, Hardy hardly penetrates into women’s consciousness while male’s consciousness is thoroughly explored. Furthermore, his heroines serve as a means to arouse eroticism. In Mitchell’s opinion, they are presented in cinematic technique of visual art and close-ups

are then assembled. Hardy himself shares the implied reader's perspective. The implied reader is male who looks and judges while females are looked at and judged. Mitchell maintains that Hardy favours as well as condemns patriarchal ideology in the presentation of female characters.

John Kucich (1994) offers commentary on the moral ambivalence of Hardy as reflected through his characters in "Moral Authority in the Late Novels: The Gendering of Art" published in *The Power of Lies: Transgression in Victorian Fiction*. By analyzing Hardy's late novels and examining Hardy's 'systematic projection of dishonesty onto the feminine' (228), Kucich argues that deception and moral transgression are frequently aligned with female characters as compared to males who overtly possess constancy. On the one hand, Hardy invests his male characters with moral truthfulness and strength to distance themselves from sexual entrapments and social temptations (229); on the other hand he empowers his women with interwoven sexual and social desire through infidelity: 'What often results is simply a more negative interpretation of the inflexibility of female dishonesty in desire or an excessively stark delineation of feminine dishonesty' (230).

Shirley A. Stave (1995), in *The Decline of the Goddess: Nature, Culture, and Women in Thomas Hardy's Fiction*, attributes Hardy's success and ever-growing popularity among readers to the strong and intricate female characters he has created: 'In the ongoing debate over whether male authors can create believable women characters or not, Hardy's women often spring to mind as examples of intelligent, psychologically believable characters who have been created by a writer not only sympathetic to the situation of women in

Victorian society but also surprisingly understanding of the subtle dynamics of sexual politics' (23). In Stave's opinion, Hardy invests his major female characters with great mythic dimensions and they can be seen as goddess figures descended from Olympian heights. Moreover, Stave traces their mythical archetypes as well, and finds this existence of archetypal pattern consistent in female protagonists of Hardy's major novels. They are upholders of those values that pose an open challenge to Victorian concept of womanhood and their existence is threatening to Victorian accepted attitudes. Stave believes that the world exists in harmony as long as they are aligned with nature of which they are part, but their alienation results in a terrible chaotic disruption in Hardy's universe.

Linda M. Shires (1999) in "The Radical Aesthetic of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*", perceives Hardy's uncertainties and ambiguities. He draws on stereotypical characters 'only to subvert that stereotype's very obviousness' (152): they are either types and are, later, individualized, or they are initially individualized till they are transformed into stereotypes and mingle with the indistinguishable mass, for example Alec and Tess (152). Shires notes that Hardy deliberately wraps plots, events and characters in mystery. A single interpretation cannot be applied to interpret his enigmatic characters: 'He fractures his central characters through multiple point of view and multiple genres...so Tess is observed from perspectives that are not only variegated but are also conflicting'(155). Moreover, Hardy can be termed as 'protomodernist' (161), particularly, with reference to his last three novels.

Norman Page (2001) in *Thomas Hardy: The Novels* explores the relationship between Hardy's men and women. Moreover, he comments on their sexuality. Arabella and Lucetta's sexuality is thoroughly analyzed and their actions are attributed to their being instinctive in nature. They make choices which are beyond rational control; hence they get themselves into trouble. Falling an easy prey to a female's provocative sexuality reduces men to naught. Page concludes that a natural response to biological instinct leads women to making wrong decisions with regard to their partners, especially when they cannot get the better of their instinct.

Emily Rose Christinat (2002) takes up a detailed study of *Jude the Obscure* and *Sons and Lovers* to establish a strong literary affinity between Hardy as a late Victorian and Lawrence as an early Modernist along with the exposition of Freudian theories. She explores the complex nature of their writings and finds similarities between the two authors not only in the art of characterization, form, content but also in their venturing into 'taboo areas' (20) —Oedipus Complex, illicit and incestuous liaisons before and after marriage. She thinks that the transition from Victorianism to Modernism owes a good deal to Hardy, Lawrence and Freud: 'Though society may have felt otherwise, critical thinkers such as Hardy, Freud, and Lawrence did not produce obscene writings; they merely sought to explore a key element of human existence largely overlooked in previous literature: sexuality' (29).

Geoffrey Harvey (2003) in *The Complete Critical Guide to Thomas Hardy* applies psychoanalytic approach to Hardy's fiction. In his analysis, women are portrayed with unusual fascination as male's object of gaze. They are agents

rather than victims as they entice men to bring about their destruction. When examined according to Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytical approaches, they seem to be objects of desire for male gaze; hence spying or voyeurism is found frequently in his novels. Hardy's women are neurotic and self-destructive due to the conflict in their complex psychological constitution. Hardy addresses the question of female's identity through Lacanian 'Lack' which feminists consider vital in determining female's subjectivity.

Atara Stein (2004) gives a detailed study on the characteristics of *The Byronic Hero in Film, Fiction and Television*—a significantly modern work not directly related to my research. I have benefited from Chapter Five entitled as “She Moves in Mysterious Ways: The Byronic Heroine” in which Stein highlights Eustacia's unusual psychological peculiarities by associating her to the literary lineage of ‘The Byronic Heroines’ (171) and equates her with Emily Bronte's Catherine Earnshaw in *Wuthering Heights*. Stein believes that Eustacia's rebellion, stormy nature and violent moods exhibit not only her demonic disposition, but also dissociate her from humanity; hence proving her to be ‘the non conforming, non-traditional female’ (Stein 170). The Byronic heroines¹, in defying their prescribed roles as women, meet tragic ends.

William Dereciwicz (2007) in “Thomas Hardy and The History of Friendship Between the Sexes” evaluates Hardy's contribution to the history of friendship between men and women with special reference to *Jude the Obscure*— a novel that seems to be inspired by the New Women fiction. Among many enumerated characteristics of New Women Fiction, is escape from the binding institution of marriage. After a detailed analysis of Sue regarding her notions

on platonic friendship between man and woman, Dereciwicz declares her to be a passionate and intellectually ambitious woman with repressed sexual desire: “She is a bundle of nerves because she is emancipated. Her physical desires pull her in one direction, her intellectual and social desires in the other” (56).

Shanta Dutta (2010) in *Ambivalence in Hardy*, has made interesting observations on Hardy’s women after a thorough exploration of Hardy’s association with women—fictional as well as real women. In her analysis, Hardy’s attitude to women remains ambivalent and he cannot be pinned down with certainty with either feminists or misogynists. The ambivalence of his females can be attributed to Hardy’s confused stance on the ‘Woman Question’ due to which they cannot be judged and categorized in black and white.

Notes

¹ Byronic heroine is rebellious, non-conformist, individualistic, ambitious and narcissistic in her disposition—a female counterpart of Byronic hero. In reacting against the conventions of society, she chooses ultimately what she sets out to repudiate. p.174

Chapter III

The Changing Concept of ‘Self’ in Psychoanalytic and Literary Perspective

The last two decades of the nineteenth century are marked by some unprecedented currents of thought and intellectual upheavals that deeply influenced all areas of contemporary and subsequent modes of perception and expression. Darwin’s theory of evolution brought revolution in the scientific thought and established the supremacy of instinct over reason which, in turn, influenced Freudian concept of instinctual drives. Equally inspiring was Charles Lyell, a famous geologist and a renowned contemporary scientist in whose view ‘the earth’s history stretched far back into deep time’ (Steffoff 46). Lyell introduced Darwin to ‘the Geologist Society of London’ (Steffoff 59) where he encountered many other distinguished scientists. Their enthusiastic acknowledgement of Darwin’s ideas on the origin of species and theory of natural selection inspired literary debates on the concept of self and instinctual drives as manifested later in Freudian concept of subjectivity. Einstein propounded The Theory of Relativity which subverted the entire concept of time, space and all related connotations by declaring them to be relative. He challenged the absolutism of time and paved the way for the emergence of modern conception of ‘time’ to be measured on the psychological rather than chronological scale. The literary artists assimilated these scientific influences and broke away from the Victorian fictional tradition of writing narrative on linear time scale and

evolved a new trend of narrative technique in the form of stream of consciousness which revolutionized the concept of ‘Self’. This technique particularly focused on the inner time consciousness rather than the outer one—abstract and chronometric.

The narrative written in the Victorian age not only reflected contemporary scientific influences but also moved on the linear or chronological scale. In this way the non-conducive environment stifled the autonomy of self by reducing an individual’s status to a mere robot and hampering his growth tremendously. Consequently, self was under immense pressure in its transition from Victorian era to modern era, particularly in the writings of those authors who combined the literary trends of the late-Victorian and early modern periods. An individual, in transitional stage, was confronted with inner as well as outer forces of enormous magnitude— both social and natural. Virginia Woolf and D. H. Lawrence contributed considerably in examining the changing concept of ‘Self’ by letting their narrative register an individual’s inner life without conforming to the established notions. Before focusing on the depiction of ‘self’ in the works of Victorian and post-Victorian literary writers, here is an overview of the subject in the overall intellectual domain— philosophical, literary and psychological—in order to establish a viable foundation for comparison and contrast.

The issue of self-cognizance and identity has been raised and discussed by great minds—from philosophers to psychologists—without reaching a satisfactory conclusion. The repeated attempts aimed at exploring ‘self’ reveal that it has been a pressing concern in almost all ages. An individual stands in

relation to the society and the age in which he lives, or, in other words, in his social and cultural context. It is the society which primarily establishes the autonomy of 'self'. 'I'¹ cannot exist without the existence of others; others are vital to make us conscious of our identity. The conflict between the 'I' and the 'other' begins at a stage where we are hardly aware of the word 'self' or 'identity'. Self is a larger entity which encompasses a world within itself. We keep digging a new self each day by coming across the 'other'. Each encounter with the 'other' gives birth to a new self unknown to us hitherto. The 'other' may be the other inside us or it may be the 'Other'² outside us in the guise of patriarchal society which is represented by capital 'O'³ in psychoanalysis. The Other may be social conventions, ethics, set of values or 'the other'—an individual. Identity is supposed to be 'socially constructed and therefore protean, akin to a masquerade costume to be donned or doffed or changed as circumstances warranted' (qtd in Eglin 1015+).

Philosophically, the division of self has its roots in Chinese philosophy and religion (Hattie 30); while psychoanalysis of self in a systematic form was attempted by Freud, William James—the pioneer explorer of 'the stream of consciousness' and Lacan—a French theorist and psychologist, whose theories opens up a vista for the literary interpretation of the concept of self. In psychoanalysis, personal or subjective identity is considered to be always constituted on the basis of 'Loss'. There will always be Lacanian 'Lack' (Mansfield 45) at the core of it. This 'Lack' forms the foundation on which feminists base their discussion of identity.

While the psychic agencies perform the same analytic work for Lacan as for Freud, Lacan sees identity as constituted through the mediation of others, through, paradoxically a process of self- alienation, so that the psychic agencies'operations are determined by, conceal or reveal a lack, an other(as Lacan called it) at the very heart of the self (Dean 16).

Analysis of psychological and philosophical theories reveal that almost all the psychologists and philosophers consider the mediation of 'the other' as vital for establishing the autonomy of 'self'. Hegel ⁴ and Lacan used the term 'other' to signify the multiplicity of self. The actual dilemma, according to Hegel, is the existence of 'I' on three different levels within 'myself', namely, what 'I' think of myself to be, what others think of 'me' or what I am for the other, and what 'I' actually am. I am never for the 'other' what I am 'for myself' or 'in myself' (Hegel 113). For modern thinkers 'self' can never be represented in the objective world. 'I' is the social construct, shaped by cultural images, involving social milieu. It represents only that part which is visible to others-- which is 'for the other'—what others want us to be or what we think we are for others; it may represent even what we believe ourselves to be, but it never represents what we are 'in ourselves'.

The person and behavior of an individual is moulded and conditioned by the society and its extraneous variables; consequently dividing him into his instinctive 'self' and his socially-conditioned and moulded 'personality'. An individual asserts himself against 'chaotic external reality' (Hattie 25). If he tries to fulfill his social obligations, his personal identity is at stake. If he negotiates with his inner world and pays heed to his inner voice, he is potentially in danger of coming in clash with the established norms of society.

Our psychic constitution is such that opposite psychic forces perpetually try to overwhelm each other. The stronger urge gets the better of the weaker one. Our natural impulses, instincts and desires are not generally in harmony with our social norms. Healthy growth is possible only when there is healthy negotiation between the inner and outer world. Whenever there is discord in our inner world, it manifests itself in our outer actions. This struggle between opposite psychic forces is more like Hegel's 'life and death struggle' (Hegel 113-115) because in trying to overwhelm the forces far bigger in magnitude than one anticipates, one is bound to lose either his life or his identity. Winnicott in his paper "The Use of an Object and Relating through Identification" affirms that 'the autonomy of the self is secured only through the symbolic destruction of the other' (qtd in Modell 103).

Self has been diversely perceived and projected throughout history. Plato and Socrates equate 'self' with spirit or soul while Descartes examines self in the context of one's consciousness of his existence; religious speculations of Buddha prove self-denial, in the absolute sense, as a means to grasp the ultimate reality of self (Hattie 11-12). Philosophy emphasizes on rational drives while psychoanalysis lays stress on instinctual drives. Platonic notion about self is based on pure intellect or reason, hence negating the existence of human body as essential to discover the real self. It implies that a person becomes all knowing when his soul subjugates the material body which is to say that rationality brings the knowledge of self. Descartes believes in the split between body and mind, and considers the consciousness of 'I' as vital to our existence. Descartes's assertion: 'I think, therefore, I am' (qtd in Hattie 12)

reflects his preoccupation with self. Had I not been able to think of who I am, I would not exist in body as well. It is consciousness alone that makes one aware of what he is. Freud, on the contrary, draws distinction between rational and irrational drives by equating them with the conscious self and the unconscious self to resolve the mystery of 'self'. Freud, contrary to Descartes, does not consider rational faculty as vital for the existence of self. For him, the instinctual drives or the unconscious self constitute the reality of being.

Like philosophers and psychologists, writers of literature have also paid exclusive attention to the issue of 'self' and its reflection in an individual's modes of thought and action. The first significant exploration and depiction of inner human self was witnessed in European literature when the Renaissance signified the shift from theocentrism to anthropocentrism, and, consequently, the tendency of diving deep into the infinite world inside a human being. Marlowe was the first who tried to point out the intra-human conflict between the instinct and the conscience. His *Dr. Faustus* is an ideal manifestation of the tussle between human longings and limitations. Dr. Faustus represents the renaissance spirit—a man seeking fulfillment in infinite knowledge, worldly fame and glory. Torn by the demands of opposite psychic forces, he succumbs to the evil impulses of his personality and stoops to the degree of total beastliness. The inner conflict has been externalized by Marlowe and is represented by good and evil angels. In their frequent visitations to Faustus there is a persistent inner struggle of an individual seeking self fulfillment. Being obsessed with the notion of obtaining limitless power, he lets his instinct dominate over his social self; hence bringing about his final

catastrophe. In his unbridled desire to establish his identity as a magician—as mighty as god—he works his own destruction. And the curtain drops with these closing lines: -

Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
And burned is Apollo's laurel bough,
That sometimes grew within this learned man.⁵

Similar traits can be traced in the works of other University Wits and Ben Jonson as well. *Volpone* by Ben Jonson can be cited to explore the self obsessed with worldly aspiration and material gain. Volpone keeps changing his roles like chameleon for fulfilling the social demands while concealing his true identity—the disgusting and sinister self. When the opportunity arises the subdued self comes to the surface and gains the upper hand. He gives vent to his evil psyche and does all sorts of nasty things. The self Volpone seems to represent in his person is deceptive: he puts on a number of masks throughout the play to deceive people which signifies multiplicity of self. The repetition of the theme of 'acting' and 'playing' shows that the world and people given over to materialism are unreal and mere pretences. Volpone stands for man in general in whose nature the love for material prosperity is ingrained. Dr. Faustus and Volpone both seek self fulfillment in their pursuits of worldly power and pelf.

The most reflective and comprehensive examples of exploration of self, however, can be found in the works of Shakespeare. His tragedies *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Othello* and *Hamlet* are but case studies of intensified sense of self. The motif of quest for self remains consistent among Shakespeare's tragedies and extends itself to his history plays like *Henry 1V*, *Richard II*, *Richard III*

etc. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare enacts the drama of eternal conflict between human aspiration and conscience. *Macbeth* has to leave the world with an unresolved mystery—by declaring life as a futile tale devoid of any meaning. Any attempt at grasping the reality of it is equally frustrating. *King Lear* is a manifestation of a self incapable of recognizing the truth beneath the surface of things. Shakespeare lets *King Lear* pay the price for misrecognition. His blindness and madness are symbolic of his inability to see and judge properly till he is totally devastated. Recognition of self and others come at a very heavy cost.

Does any here know me? This is not Lear
Does Lear walk thus? Speak thus? Where
are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens or his discerning
Are lethargied Ha! Waking? 'Tis not so.
Who is it that can tell me who I am.⁶

Henry IV recounts the adventures of Prince Hal who is deemed fit by Shakespeare to lay claim on the office of kingship. He slips into multiple roles and plays them successfully: each encounter is but a step towards self-recognition. It is this capacity which gives him edge over those who mess up their roles and cannot resolve their conflicts. *Richard II*—a journeyman from being everything to nothing—is a tale of self-realization. Self-aggrandizement keeps him in false illusions about himself and he makes wrong decisions at the wrong time. He holds a sense of strong selfhood till self-recognition comes in the form of self-annihilation. His psychological complexity and turmoil stem from multiplicity of his roles—as a monarch and as a fallible mortal. He pays the price for becoming conscious of his existence as a man. *Richard III* records a deteriorating sense of self in a spiritually depraved person given over

to greed and acquisition of power. His marginalized and peripheral position as an individual due to his physical deformity occasions a movement towards establishing his identity as villain if not hero of the book.

A closer analysis of Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* reveals that Hamlet engages our attention in the very opening of the play by posing the same question when he asks "who's there?" and we are alarmed at the very outset of the play. We start wondering "who is he trying to discover?" Is he addressing his audience, the readers or himself? The eternal conflict thus begins which ends up only when Hamlet is a breath away from his death. This very struggle to discover the 'self' is bound to bring catastrophe. John Lee views Shakespeare's Hamlet as enactment of inner discord and Hamlet's concern about identity as 'both an issue and at issue' (Robinson 242+). Moreover, he comments on the opening of the play and analyzes Hamlet's interiority in Renaissance and postmodern perspective.

Lee restages the controversies of self which the play enacts, charting debates over character, identity, and interiority, a chief focus of the play's criticism. The early critical history of Hamlet is often a paean to Shakespeare as a writer who invests his characters with a life-like self (qtd in Robinson 242+).

In Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 'I' of Hermia clashes with the Athenian privilege (Other), or customs which do not sanction her marriage with Lysander (other) without her father's consent. Her love for Lysander brings her in conflict with the strong patriarchy represented by her father which she has challenged.

Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me.
O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell!⁷

She seeks absolute identification with Lysander which brings her in conflict with the patriarchal culture of Athens. There is no possibility of self realization unless we meet the 'other' and are willing to pay the price.

The Merchant of Venice deals apparently with the eternal conflict of believer and non-believer which is symbolized by Antonio and Shylock. In other words, the play is a manifestation of internal conflict and multiplicity of self. This inner conflict is dramatized in which Shylock's identity as Jew is threatened and negated, which triggers a movement towards self-realization. This conflict is an outcome of racial sexism and religious bias: Shylock and Antonio refuse to acknowledge each other's identity and religion. It involves a life-death struggle in Hegelian sense: two opposing forces within psyche seem to be at work and the play can be interpreted as a dialogue between our two selves. Each situation involves self fulfillment or self negation; hence this frustration over not being acknowledged leads to the clash of values between an individual and society.

The notion of 'self' underwent transmutation in the early seventeenth century environment when science and religion blurred the boundaries by penetrating into the literary domain. These currents of thought got amalgamated with human feelings and emotions which found its true expression in the metaphysical school of poetry. John Donne, George Herbert and Henry Vaughn represented human self in terms of philosophical, analytical and scientific images and analogies; hence self came to be understood as a unified entity—an amalgamation of intense feeling and thought—which is beyond physical grasp and can be defined in abstract terms. Metaphysical existence

reasserted the platonic conception of self, or, in other words implied the discovery of self through intellectual enquiry. On one hand expression of human feelings in abstract terms gave scope to reasoning faculty to dig deep down the surface meaning of human thought and actions; on the other hand religious myths served to dramatize, in literature, the essential conflict of a human soul.

Milton explored the theme of self-assertion and self-negation in his poem of epic grandeur *Paradise Lost*. The religious element lent credibility and force to the tale of self-realization and self-fulfillment. In the seventeenth century, the word 'selfhood' had negative connotations as Sawdey points out. It was understood in the sense of conveying one's 'inability to govern the self' rather than signifying 'the quality of having or possessing a 'self'. Self-assertion was considered to be a predominating characteristic of Satan: 'it was a token of the spiritually unregenerate individual, in thrall to the flesh rather than the spirit'(Sawdey 30). According to Sawdey, 'Milton explore[s] the language of negative selfhood in *Paradise Lost*(1667)' by investing Satan with a sense of 'selfhood' which indicates Satan's self-depravation and ' a state of spiritual isolation, rather than the presence of reflective enquiry'(30).

According to Christian's tradition, the struggle for self-effacement and self-fulfillment started with the first sin committed by Adam on being instigated by Eve. The concept of self dates back to the creation and expulsion of man from the Garden of Eden; similarly gender discourse began when Eve was blamed for being the 'ruin of mankind' (qtd in Synnott 40). Patriarchalism, sexism and misogyny commenced with early Christianity.

Modern thinkers have built on the foundations of the Greek and Judaeo-Christian traditions. While we cannot consider everyone, we can select some highlights, before we consider the attack on these constructions of gender. Milton, the Puritan, was one of the last to insist on the old unequal Christian ideals: 'He for God only, she for God in him' (*Paradise Lost*, Bk 4, 259). Eve eventually understands this: 'Unargu'd I obey; so God ordains. God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise' (*Paradise Lost*, Bk 8,) (Synnott 49).

Milton believes that individual has to pay the price for claiming his individuality which finds its true expression in Satan's revolt against God. The fundamental issue of self-assertion and self-negation is dramatized in Satan's war against God for the acknowledgement of his identity. Satan wages war with God to establish his independence, and negate the existence of God by leaving His paradise. He asserts his identity at the cost of being thrown out of Heaven even when he is fully aware of the magnitude of the challenge lying ahead and his own status as a subjugated being. Each conflict is an outcome of a negation of identity and each individual who strives for self-realization pays price to prove his individuality. God's Heaven proves to be Satan's Hell like Hermia's paradise that turns into hell the moment she meets the 'other' (Lysander) in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

After Milton, the self came to be recognized as entity to be discovered by the sway of pure intellect. In the eighteenth century literature we find individuals examined in cultural and social matrix. In the age of enlightenment and reason, the works of neo-classicists—Dryden and Pope—contributed to the changing notion of self whose focus remained primarily on mind and rationality. *Dryden's Mac Flecnoe* is an egoistical presentation of a self in which Shadwell is held in contempt for his dullness and incompetency. His

poetry is ridiculed and he is not rated among poets. Shadwell's dominating attribute which qualifies him to be the monarch of the Kingdom of Dullness is his lack of sense and intellect. *An Essay on Man* by Alexander Pope reflects inadequacy of man's knowledge and insignificance of his supposed sense of self in the chain of being.

In the literary tradition of this period, the notion of an individual self in relation to society gained currency. The rise of the novel, a new genre, broadened the scope and understanding of an intricate self by presenting a realistic picture of a man living in a hypocritical society while camouflaging his genuine feelings of nobility. Being an effective vehicle for recording fine human feelings and sentiments, the novel had the flexibility to accommodate diversity of self and its representation 'because it took as significant the story of the private individual—the self as a private person' (Mullan 124). Defoe, Richardson and Fielding depict self in its true colour by tracing the fortune of an individual to expose the hypocrisy of the surrounding social set up. Instead of looking for ideal figures and recount their adventures, they choose rogues or violated maidens to present the self and its duplicity. Rogues like Tom Jones and blemished maidens like Pamela represent a far superior level of selfhood. Their ascent from lowly status—of a foundling and a servant maid respectively—to respectability marks their growth of self and individuality. 'To be an individual—which, in the novels of both Defoe and Richardson, frequently means being on one's own—is to be committed to making oneself an example'(Mullan 130).

The pursuit motif and the consequent discovery of self, misrecognition and eventual recognition are recurrent themes in Fielding's *Tom Jones*. Fielding betrays his belief in the inherent goodness and nobility of heart through character delineation of Tom Jones. John Mullan describes Henry Fielding's narrator "as one of those 'who deal in private Character, who search into the most retired Recesses, and draw forth Examples of Virtue and Vice, from Holes and Corners of the World'"(123). Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice* projects her viewpoint through her female characters like Elizabeth whose individuality is threatened by a dominating figure of Darcy. He represents strong patriarchy that tries to subdue Elizabeth's identity as an individual. He lashes her ego by belittling remarks about her social class in which girls are out for hunting husbands. Her insult at the hands of Darcy triggers a moment of self realization and starts a movement towards establishing her autonomy. Eventually, Darcy has to confess his mistake in being judgmental regarding Elizabeth.

The Romantic Movement marks a shift in the concept of self by laying emphasis on individual in the world of nature rather than society. Quest for the unattainable ideals, plunge into infinitude, and hankering after the unknown undermines the importance of corporeal existence. By challenging the domain of reason and rationality of the Enlightenment period, romantics aim at achieving a unique sense of selfhood and fulfillment by exalting the significance of spirit or soul. What Milton considers as detrimental and threatening to human existence, namely, too much insistence on I, is also a vital element and the essence of life in Wordsworth's poetry. *The Prelude* is a

spiritual autobiography of Wordsworth which recounts the essential experiences of his life and the way they contributed to the growth of the poet's mind. Wordsworth voices his concept of harmonious society in the following lines quoted from *The Prelude* Book 1. One can grasp the ultimate reality of his existence in relation with his fellow beings through negation of 'I'.

The mind of Man is fram'd even like the breath
And harmony of music. There is a dark
Invisible workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, and makes them move
In one society. (*The Prelude* 351-355)

'Discordant elements' is a reference to the existence of smaller selves or contradictory elements in our psyche that sets chaos.

It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure; not without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my Boat move on,
Leaving behind her still on either side
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. (*The Prelude* 388-394)

Shelley, a revolutionary and rebellious to the core of his being, trumpets his faith in the liberation of individual self and its autonomy in 'Ode to the West Wind'. He instills the spirit of revolt among his fellow beings—urges them to rise and lay claim on individuality. He believes in the liberty of thought and expression to relish the essential independence of self. Human impulses, if curbed, hamper the growth of genuine self. His defiance affirms his strong revulsion for social institutions which does not sanction the growth of autonomous self. Contrary to Shelley's belief, Byron perceives the whole social set up tainted with a tinge of hypocrisy. Byron seems to foster a belief in the inherent hypocrisy of human nature. To think of a true self is a utopian

dream even when the curbing influences—law and society—are eliminated. Human beings are prone to hypocrisy which is the worst of all social ills.

Keats's Odes reflect his psychological growth and intellectual enquiry into the depth of human soul. 'Ode to a Nightingale' particularly manifests Keats's obsession with a sense of self. Absolute self-negation—the quality which has been widely acclaimed as his negative capability—enables Keats to participate in the experience of a bird. A complete identification with the nightingale is an effort to taste anew that sense of freedom or fulfillment for which he longs. For Keats, negation of 'I' is a sure step to self-realization because it liberates him from his corporeal bondage. As a consequence, he experiences an ecstasy—touches upon the zenith of delight. Whereas his imagination lends him what his heart and emotions desire, his reason denies him the pleasure of being in that state of forgetfulness for long. By plunging into the depth of the unknown or infinitude, one discovers the ultimate truth. 'Wordsworth alludes to it as "a presence that disturbs me"; Shelley calls it an "unseen power," and for Baudelaire it is a "luminous hollow"' (Gergen 20).

This forsaking 'I' makes us aware of the existence of so many smaller selves that connect us to higher order of things and a common chain of humanity! This negation of one self to find the other vital self opens up vast possibilities of self- fulfillment. Ironically, self- effacement is the only means to self- fulfillment. Whoever discovers the ultimate reality of self is bound to be annihilated, symbolically or literally, in the process either by self-assertion or by self-effacement. The alien element exists within or without us, which seeks acknowledgement, otherwise it brings destruction. Self asserts itself in the face

of adverse circumstances and environmental difficulties in which case an individual suffers at the hand of the society.

Nineteenth century is a prolific age not only in the sense of scientific and technological developments but also in terms of its emphasis on female self which is the focal point of our discussion. It has been overlooked here in the chain of transition of the concept of self after its introductory dimension in the beginning of the chapter. Nevertheless, it will be examined in detail in the succeeding chapter. Nineteenth century novel and poetry show diverse tendencies and influences with reference to the study of self. A strict line of demarcation between male and female spheres make this transitional period all the more challenging for its concentration on female identity. Nineteenth century writers have penned down volumes on the deteriorating condition of woman in society and her psychological repression leading to neurotic behavior and nervous disorders.

Nineteenth century culture bears witness to a gradually intensifying anxiety about the structure of the self and the security of its lodging in the world. Writers as diverse as Mary Shelley, Robert Louis Stevenson, Hoffman and Dostoyesky all in their own way produced images of an interior life that was potentially fractured, of a self prey to irrational impulses that threatened its usual role in the social order, and of a sexuality whose meaning was more psychological than procreative (Mansfield 25).

We witness a radical shift in the literary trends and general atmosphere of the 20th century. The major dilemma faced by people was identity crises and mental disorientation due to which literature written during the later half of the 19th century and early twentieth century dealt with the inner life of an individual, particularly woman. In the 20th century, self came to be recognized

as gender specific, particularly, in the feminine writings of Virginia Woolf who explored the inner life by manipulating a technical side of novel. This too individualized novel—with its focus on inner life rather than depicting a picture of society or man's relation with it—was a significant step towards understanding 'self', particularly, female self and identity.

The concept of 'Self' developed into a consistent philosophy in the feminine writings of the 20th century authors because if individual suffers mental anxiety over a question of self, then it is obvious that it becomes a debatable issue for modern female writers like Virginia Woolf, Alice James and Emily Dickinson whose primary concern is woman's identity. They suffered from bouts of depression while dealing with the question of self and identity with particular reference to woman. Virginia Woolf's works reflect her discomfort at the gaps she finds in the subjective identity of woman and its objective representation in the society. While dealing with the psychological life of an individual, Woolf finds gap between subjective identity of woman and objective representation of it. Her works reflect her discomfort at this gap and woman's frustration over being misrepresented in language. Virginia Woolf makes woman's silence as her powerful weapon to be used against men. Mrs. Ramsey in *To the Lighthouse*, can be cited as an example through which Woolf projects her viewpoint of a strong woman. Mrs. Ramsey had 'the whole of the other sex under her protection' (TL 6).

In the autobiographical writings of Emily Dickinson, Alice James, and Virginia Woolf both the search for--rather than the certainty of--the "self" and the sense of "shared identity with other women" are strikingly evident. Each seeks in different ways to assert an individuality by rejecting the "normal" role of

women (a rejection that results in mental and/ or physical anguish); each addresses the page/reader from behind a series of identities or “masks” and each makes clear that her “private” writing is addressed to some “public” with which she has an uneasy relationship (Walker 274).

Emily Dickinson’s and Alice James’s autobiographical writings highlight woman’s resistance to be defined by cultural images of woman. Each of them suffered from nervous disorders and mental anguish at finding their inability to come up with any specific definition of self with reference to woman. The more they tried to establish their autonomy in the patriarchal culture of late 19th and early 20th century, the more they found themselves as victims of repression; hence silence in feminine writing is more pronounced than authorial voice. Women writers suffered from the repression of desire and a sense of confinement more than anyone else. The urge to utter the unutterable while living within the walled sanctuary of patriarchal culture led to insanity. The dilemma is ‘at once within this culture and outside it, the woman writer experiences not only exclusion, but an internalized split’(Jacobson 38). These feminine writings represent woman’s self in terms of gaps and silences in the texts.

Lawrence substantiates Woolf’s opinion regarding woman’s self which is beyond representation in words or signification of language. ‘Woman is “the unutterable which man must forever continue to try to utter”’; she achieves womanhood at the point where she is silenced (like Sue Bridehead) and installed within the sanctuary’ (qtd in Jacobus 30). Anna Victrix in *The Rainbow*, voices D. H. Lawrence’s opinion about the concept of ‘self’, and the means she discovers for self-fulfillment. D. H. Lawrence shows three

generations of men and women engaged in gender struggle. Almost all the characters are torn by a conflict both from within and without; they are up against each other to prove their individualities. Anna faces enormous resistance in the way of self-assertion. She has a distinct identity and wants to find fulfillment on her own rationally while William, her husband, is a conventional man who searches God in cathedrals.

Anna's reaction to this is to withdraw. Realizing after months of conflict that the "final release" she has desired with her husband is not possible because Will "could not be liberated from himself." (182), she becomes determined to achieve autonomy through motherhood (Templeton 119).

Women, in the novel, seem to be moving faster psychologically and resolving their confusions. Among these women, Anna finds the rainbow; she falls to placid phase after bearing children. However, in Templeton's view it is Ursula who overcomes the fear of the unknown by plunging into the depth of it and by 'becoming individual, self responsible, taking her own initiative' (108).

The End of the Affair by Graham Greene records Sarah's journey through the mystery of life and her ultimate resignation to a state of obliviousness to worldly cares. She moves from physical love to a higher order of being by negating her physical body altogether. She eventually merges with the 'other' (God) by negating her existence and attains self-fulfillment in spirituality. There is a pursuit for salvation of her soul after her illicit relationship with Maurice Bendrix. When Maurice reads her entries in the diary, then he comes to know why she has deserted him and his ordinary, mundane love? Her entry on June 17, 1944 reads:

A vow's not all that important--a vow to somebody I've never known, to somebody I don't really believe in. Nobody will know that I've broken a vow, except me and Him--and He doesn't exist, does he? He can't exist. You can't have a merciful God and this despair.⁸

A terrible conflict—between physical and spiritual love—ensues in Sarah's soul and she chooses to transcend the known, familiar love by absolute oneness with God. Sarah finds the ultimate truth when God takes her repudiation of Him—her hatred for Him—yet grants back her love (Maurice). She eventually starts hating 'the statues, the crucifix, all the emphasis on the human body' even her own body when she goes in the Roman Catholic Church. She wants to destroy her body and mingle with some sort of abstract God—something vague, amorphous, cosmic...like a powerful vapour moving among the chairs and walls' (TEOA 130). Sarah, the sinner, becomes Sarah the saint.

Literature authored by males, on the other hand, portrays women as devouring figures. William Faulkner says 'There's not any such thing as a woman born bad, because they are all born bad, born with the badness in them'(qtd in Aguiar 34). From male point of view, women have always been performing the role of an instigator, seductress, temptress etc. 'In male-written literature...from Homer to Hardy, from Milton to Mailer, she is indicted in scores of literary works for her avarice, immorality, and bad temperament' (Aguiar 34).

Woman takes on any identity given to her by patriarchal culture; she can be called witch, seductress, temptress, instigator, immoral etc. Patriarchal culture is always bent upon obliterating her identity—the core of her existence. Freud,

after thirty years of his research into women's psyche, eventually concludes that woman's identity is elusive, that any effort at getting to know her is frustrating. 'Such are women: a 'riddle', an 'enigma' and a 'problem', even to themselves—as men are not' (Synnott 55). The more we try to understand a woman, the more disillusioned we become. As women are judged by their objective reality, they are marginalized due to gender discrimination. Their status is a subordinate one; they revolt in disgust against the culture and the system that try to suppress them and the values through which they are adjudged.

Cindy Sherman, an American photographer, affirms female identity as fluid and plural rather than fixed and monolithic....a challenge to the masculine desire to fix the woman in a stable and stabilizing identity.

Throughout her work she exposes only a constituted self—a self composed entirely from the repertoire of cultural images of women. In this way she reveals herself while concealing her identity, and suggests authenticity while intending deception. Moreover, by denying us access to the individual woman, Sherman highlights a taken-for-granted double vision that is at work whenever we rely on well-defined, general categories of woman as a means of knowing specific woman (Benjamin 2-3).

Women's identity is elusive due to the multiple cultural images through which it is constituted. The conflict between the inner instinctual self and the outer social self sets the chaos which is a vital requisite for establishing the autonomy of self. This conflict forms a base for the discussion of Hardy's rare women who are at war with the social norms. The society obstructs their movement towards self-realization. It evokes violent reactions which compel them to transgress the set boundaries. In their quest for self, they are forced to either retreat to their feminine zone or risk their lives by paying for the achieved autonomy.

Notes

¹ *Literature and Psychoanalysis: Intertextual Readings*. P-6(listed)

Refers to specular 'I' as well as social 'I'. Between the age of 6 months to two years child makes a transition from the dialect of instinctive 'I'(id) to social 'I' when society intervenes through the authority of parents and superego imposes itself.

² *Critical Desire: Psychoanalysis and the Literary Subject*. See 59-60 (listed)

Jacques Lacan, a French Psychologist and theorist while elaborating on the concept of subjectivity and its constitution, uses 'Other' to denote the cultural 'Law of the Father' which in broader sense signifies society or world. Lacan, in his famous essay, on 'The Mirror Stage' in 'Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis' considers 'Lack' at the core of constitution of subjectivity. The loss that child suffers at the age when he enters into symbolic order of language. There occurs a split in a subject which he tries to bridge all his life. All future identifications are determined by the first loss i.e alienation from the mother and subsequent efforts are directed to recover the loss by identification with the object of desire. Lacan formulates his psychoanalytic theory based on Freudian concept of subjective identity.

³ 'Other' (dignified with a capital) represents the Father, the Law, castration and language or, in other words, it represents the domain of social dialect. (Pakin-Gounelas 7)

⁴ Hegel, in *The Phenomenology of Mind* maintains that self can be asserted only when acknowledged by the other. 'I' and the 'other' require mutual recognition of each other otherwise they suffer by courting death. See Modell p-98-99; Hegel 113-115

⁵ Christopher Marlow's *Dr. Faustus*. Act V, Scene ii.

⁶ Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Act I, Scene iv, Lines 225-229

⁷ Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Act I, Scene i, Lines 204-207.

⁸ Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*. P-110. Any subsequent reference to the text of this edition has been shown by characters TEOA.

Chapter IV

“Angel-in-the-House”¹: Image of Women in Victorian Society and Fiction

In the comprehensive scheme of the Victorian society, men were associated with warfare, traveling, economy and financial stability, while women were supposed to stay at home and turn it into a heaven. Males and females had distinct spheres of their own, the boundaries of which could not be transgressed without calling for public censure. This orthodoxy and conservatism was voiced in the poetry of the Victorian age in which the ideology of separate spheres was distinctly defined. The following extract from Tennyson's *The Princess* (1847) substantiates this point.

Man for the field and woman for the hearth;
Man for the sword, and for the needle she;
Man with the head, and woman with the heart;
Man to command, and woman to obey;
All else confusion. (qtd in S.Mitchell 267)

The same heart versus head dichotomy is echoed and reinforced by psychologists, anthropologists, philosophers and poets of the Victorian age who equate men with rationality and women with emotionality. ‘A famous anthropologist J. McGrigor Allan, reinscribed in an 1869 essay the common belief that “mans[sic] realm is the intellect—woman's the affections”². For women in the Victorian culture the emphasis was on home and domesticity while men were bread winners and protectors. Intellectual training or

rationalism was the last thing to be expected of a woman when her task was self- reformation. It was widely believed that pursuing scientific career ‘unsexes’³ a woman. Murphy quotes a stanza from Naden’s ‘Love Versus Learning’ to reinforce the fact that a woman is never appreciated if she possesses intellectual gift because it qualifies her for stepping into males’ domain.

My logic he sets at defiance,
Declares that my Latin's no use,
And when I begin to talk Science
He calls me a clear little goose.
He says that my lips are too rosy
To speak in a language that's dead,
And all that is dismal and prosy
Should fly from so sunny a head. (qtd in Murphy 107+)

Reynolds elaborates on the concept of ‘the home as dominant, legitimate sphere’ for women, as understood by the Victorians. Interpreting the frequently quoted Ruskin's lecture ‘Of Queen's Garden’ (1864), he describes home as a private place—a place of security—to which people run from the wilderness and chaos of commercial life.

While John Ruskin’s classic exposition of the ‘true nature of home’ in his 1864 lecture can no longer be accepted as definitive or descriptive, his romantic vision of the home as ‘a sacred place, a vestal temple’, guarded and inspired by representatives of ‘pure womanhood’, continues to colour our understanding of the lives of Victorian women. The home in Ruskin’s conception was not a physical location but a state of mind, of withdrawal from ‘the inconsistently-minded, unknown, unloved, or hostile society of the outer world’, to the ‘place of peace’...This ideal home had no purpose beyond the servicing of its immediate members, the nuclear family unit; in turn, the constant reproduction of home and family for its own sake—the creation of a ‘haven in a heartless world’, in Christopher Lasch’s evocative phrase—became the normative function for women (Reynolds 26).

Domestic training rather than education at schools was deemed essential for girls to be able to cope with household management in future. The training of girls was deemed indispensable to secure them both decent husbands and well-paid jobs. The schools, patronized by aristocratic women, were inspected and supervised regularly for moral excellence of mistresses (teachers) who, in turn, were responsible for pupils' moral upbringing. Even in schools the facilities available to girls were limited as compared to the privileges boys had in their institutions (qtd in Reynolds 92).

Domestic training was thus seen as providing both practical training and a moral element. It would improve working-class living standards and also inculcate middle-class virtues such as cleanliness, tidiness, thrift, industry, perseverance and steadiness of character. Enforced by religious teaching it would spell out for working-class women that their role was domestic; housewifery and providing for husbands and children were their responsibility. As wives, the provision of tidy, welcoming houses and well-cooked meals would encourage their menfolk to stay at home away from the temptations of the public house or the brothel (Moore 13).

The curriculum then devised for girls and boys was a matter of controversy and deliberation. Girls' curriculum catered to the requirements that may arise in their future life. The requisites to prepare girls for future life were needle work, weaving, sewing, laundering, cooking, knitting and tailoring while subjects like arithmetic or sciences had only secondary place. Moral discipline, ethical training and behavioral propriety were integral to a woman's accomplishment; 'housewifery courses' rather than reading books were deemed to be necessary to learn at elementary schools.

The women's knowledge was gained only by conversing with the men, not by reading themselves...The men thought justly on this point, that what knowledge the women had out of their

sphere should be given by themselves and not picked up at their own hand in ill-chosen books of amusement (qtd in Moore 10).

Most of the schools were patronized by ladies belonging to superior class who imposed strict definition of middle class femininity on working class women. Furthermore, Sunday Schools were established for the benefit of girls and ‘were considered appropriate for young, unmarried women, training them in public service and reinforcing the ties between the classes’ (Reynolds 91).

Victorian women had limited opportunities, and were not free to choose a career of their choice. There were certain predetermined occupations out of which they had to make choices. Women writers were not acknowledged as authors of the first rank. 'Twentieth-century critics, however, have argued that publishers and reviewers edged or elbowed or shoved women out of the literary marketplace' and 'that women novelists were underpaid or not published and that the work they did was downgraded' (qtd in Casey 151). The common trades for women were to become domestic servants, housemaids, governesses, seamstresses, teachers, typists, etc. 'Women as workers did not harmonize with the philosophy of the Victorians, their deification of the home. Women ought to marry. There ought to be husbands for them. Women were potential mothers' (Neff 14). The wages women got after working long hours a day were not the same as were given to men who worked for exactly the same hours though the same amount of labour was involved (S.Mitchell 105).

A woman's reproductive activity was considered pathological due to which she was considered inferior intellectually as compared to men. Vocations

involving intellectual activity were considered threatening for her. Her physical disability was supposed to undermine her reasoning ability; hence, making her unfit for certain tasks demanding competency. Medicine and scientific pursuits were considered inappropriate for women as, according to physician Henry Maudsley, 'it would be an ill thing, if it should so happen, that we got the advantages of a quantity of female intellectual work at the price of a puny, enfeebled, and sickly race' (qtd in Murphy 107+). Woman was discouraged from participating in politics as it was despicable for men.

The iconography associated with the representation of politically active women in the nineteenth century was commonly based on paradox, highlighting the disparity between what was expected of them as women--in other words, the dominant evangelical, middle-class ideology--and their actual public behavior as witnessed and interpreted by men. Walpole's description of Mary Wollstonecraft as a hyena in petticoats illustrates this type of paradox perfectly (Garlick 159).

Women were known by the signification of patriarchs and were described in relational terms. The role designated to women was to be ideal mothers, daughters, and wives rather than be recognized as suffragettes or activists. They did not have a distinct identity of their own. Remaining single was preferred over getting married. Women who remained single were a little bit privileged as compared to those who were married. Married women were entirely dependent on their husbands for sustenance and maintenance, unless settlements were made beforehand to keep them in a secure position after the death of their husbands. Marriage curtailed their rights enormously while spinsters could have a choice of moving to their married sisters' houses for child care or could stay with their brothers and sisters-in-law. Women

preferred to stay single rather than give up their independence by getting married. Even in aristocratic households 'marital status had a significant effect on women's autonomy, the widow of independent means having the greatest scope, the married woman the least' (Reynolds 42). Marriages were usually delayed till thirties due to economic reasons and it drastically changed a woman's status.

A woman's civil status was dramatically altered when she married...husband and wife were "one person, and that person is the husband." Once married, a woman had no independent legal existence. Everything she owned or inherited or earned was her husband's; she had no right even to spend her own income for her own needs. A wife had to live with her husband wherever he chose. She could not sign a contract or make a will. She had no standing before a court in any legal action because, in the eyes of the law, she had no separate existence. She also had no right to control or custody of her children; their father could train or educate them in any way he wished (Mitchell 103)⁴

In order to relieve themselves from sexual monotony, married women had illicit connections with other men through go-between people. They were bound to feign loyalty to their husbands due to their financial dependence, but would reveal their frustration to their friends somehow. Women looked upon the institution of marriage with revulsion due to the horror that they would be physically violated; they would often pretend to be ill and misfit for consummation. If girls were ignorant in sexual matters, it was an indication of their moral piety.

In the Victorian culture, men were supposed to initiate and inspire sexual undertakings, with women as passive agents. 'She was expected to remain ignorant about sex till the day of her marriage' (S.Mitchell 268). Physical

ailments were common due to psychological stress and the common cause was unhappy state of affairs at home. The physical aversion led to the severing of the bond between husband and wife. The best code of conduct for women was concealment and repression: to practise deceit; to feign coyness; to put up with husband's rage and outbursts; to pretend to be ignorant in sexual matters thereby depending upon him altogether would win for a woman what her assertiveness and resistance to her husband's plans could not. Men would find emotional comfort elsewhere while women would suffer silently in perpetual agony carrying the wound of his infidelity.

The laws of divorce did not do justice to women as the grounds for obtaining divorce were restricted in favour of men. 'Man only had to supply evidence to a court of law to prove his wife's adultery and woman had to provide an evidence of cruelty which ought to be severe enough to procure her justice or separation'(S.Mitchell 105). Men hesitated to divorce their unhappy wives as it was considered a disgrace for all and ruin for career-oriented men.

The demarcation along gender lines established the supremacy of men over women by specifying domains for both. Coventry Patmore's verse sequence *The Angel in the House* became a famous icon to be used by almost all the Victorians to sum up the virtues of ideal image of women. It is ironical that the currency of this icon increased when Victoria ascended the throne of England and the contradiction inherent in this icon became explicit to people in her dual role as a mother of nine children and a monarch (Langland, "Angels" 62). Thomson comments on the contrast between the perception of the role of women and the authority of the queen.

It is an odd contradiction that in the period in which the doctrine of separate spheres of activity for men and women was most actively developed and propounded, the highest public office in the land was held by a woman.(xiv-xv) (qtd in Langland, “Angels” 65)

Aristocratic women were no exception in the fulfillment of their domestic obligations while holding public offices simultaneously. Such conflicting expectations were difficult to be fulfilled by women due to the nature of their contradictory demands. Not only was the Queen of England subjected to public remonstrance for any negligence on her part in the discharge of her domestic duties, but also well known authors and critics passed through traumatic phases during strained marital relationships. Women’s duty was exclusively house keeping, domestic economy and rearing up children. Even the queen of England could not forsake her domestic obligations. Queen Victoria took it upon herself to be loyal to her countrymen as a monarch at the age of eighteen while fulfilling her obligation toward the moral upbringing of nine children as a mother and taking care of her husband Albert as a wife. The Queen’s prestigious office could not exempt her from the supervision and management of royal household. Those employed in the royal palace were supposed to observe strict moral code. Violators were treated severely because the Queen herself presented the best example of a virtuous woman. On getting married, girls were instructed beforehand to look after their husbands and family as their topmost priorities. The advice given by Lady Cecil Talbot’s father is worth quoting here:

After the Almighty, let your husband reign in your heart. You have now no duty but to obey him. Watch his looks and fulfil all his wishes, conform yourself to his habits and inclinations. Have but one mind, have no secrets from him. Be open,

unreserved with him, reserved and cautious with all other men....The married life is either one of happiness or of misery, and much depends on the tact and conduct of the wife (Reynolds 5).

In the Victorian society, one frequently finds instances of marriages in which couples drifted apart due to the expectations contradictory in nature. According to Jennifer M. Lloyd, John Ruskin and Effie's marriage is an example of one of those stressed marriages which broke off due to the nature of conflicting roles that Effie was expected to perform. In an article "Conflicting Expectations in Nineteenth Century British Matrimony: The Failed Companionship of Effie Gray and John Ruskin.", Lloyd explores Effie and Ruskin's marital relationship and the reasons that account for its failure. Being a girl of nineteen years, she could hardly become an eligible secretary, or assistant in her husband's intellectual ventures. Ruskin was fond of traveling and it was expected of Effie to be a pleasant companion while touring with her husband. Besides fulfilling her role to be a hostess in social gatherings and to be a household manager, it was her fundamental duty to be able to type a manuscript for her husband's convenience, failing which deprived her of her right to become a mother. She got married at the age of eighteen, but marriage was never consummated on the pretext that she was too young to carry out the responsibilities of motherhood. Consequently, it became publicly known that she fell short of her husband's and Parent-in-Law's expectations due to which she was not acknowledged in the Ruskins' family and authority was never delegated to her. Such maltreatment of a woman by a man, who was a well known critic and intellectually far superior than the ordinary males of his age, is a testimony that conflicting expectations

due to the contradictory roles in the Victorian society led women to suffer from bouts of depression, the symptoms of which appeared in their neurotic behavior. On the one hand, accessibility to public sphere was denied to her while on the other, she was supposed to have a capability to be a helping mate in his pursuits (86-104).

For other Victorian couples, however, particularly when male scholars and other professionals such as John Ruskin worked in their homes, the separations of public and private was far less defined and wives were more likely to struggle with conflicting demands on their time and energy. To be such a wife was also to be her husband's companion, to understand his work well enough to be his secretary and researcher, have the stamina for sustained travel, and still provide domestic comfort in all circumstances. For Effie and women like her, this left little or no room for the limitations of pregnancy or the demands of motherhood, experiences expected by the majority of British Victorian women. Instead, they faced a Victorian version of the choice between a career – in this case, the husband's—and motherhood, or a problematic combination of the two, as Effie herself later experienced in her marriage to Millais (Lloyd 104).

To be the wife of a genius was more challenging as it multiplied her duties double fold: she had to be attentive to the needs of her husband to keep him in good humour while simultaneously assisting him in his literary pursuits, falling short of which meant being deficient in managerial skills. The frustration of the wife of a genius is explicit in Jane Carlyle's confidential correspondences after being disillusioned with Thomas Carlyle.

From her letters and journals, Jane Carlyle does not seem to have enjoyed without reservations her life of nurturing her husband's genius. She accepted that he ruled the house, but as she wrote in 1835 to John Sperling, 'In spite of the honestest efforts to annihilate my I-ity, or merge it in what the world doubtless considers my better half; I still find myself a self-subsisting and alas! Self-seeking me,' Throughout her life she retained that sense of separate identity, and doubtless she spoke for many of her sex (Perkin 259-260).

The same conflicting expectations became the major source of embitterment and tension in the matrimonial relationship of our subject author Thomas Hardy and Emma Hardy. Initially, Emma lent a great helping hand in Hardy's intellectual undertakings. Despite domestic obligations, she contributed to writing manuscripts of his novels. But 'It was the fate of Emma's writing, whether merely scribble or more ambitiously creative, to be forgotten, suppressed, erased. Her voice was silenced, her achievement negated' (Dutta 131). It was only after her death that her worth as a wife, an assistant and a devoted companion was realized by him. Similarly, Hardy's second wife, Florence Hardy, proved herself to be a competent secretary; she even withdrew herself from her own commitments in the better interest of Hardy's literary career. 'Although Hardy continued to exploit his wife as a convenient mouthpiece to air indirectly his own opinions, he seems to have frowned upon Florence's independent literary efforts once she became 'Mrs Hardy' (Dutta 138). With the exceptions of a few couples who enjoyed affectionate marital life with mutual understanding to promote each other's interests, many lived together physically but were divorced mentally.

A genius like Dickens himself suffered at the hands of the woman who was not tailored to be a wife. Dickens, consciously or unconsciously, projects the same viewpoint after having married a wrong woman, mistaking her to be an ideal one (Langland, "Angels" 81). Dickens's wife proved to be a misfit in her domestic as well as social capacity that affected Dickens' career adversely. A woman's eligibility to be an ideal in every role was measured by her extraordinary managerial talent. She was expected to impose order and discipline in

chaotic situation and steer man in the right direction. Despite the fact that such hard standards were set for the Victorian angel, her status was one of a subordinate.

Clearly it was the woman's responsibility to counteract the onslaught of evil in the world by dedicating herself solely to the social and moral well being of the male folk. The family, as the famous evangelical expert of late eighteenth century manners Hannah More, described it, was the "Christian haven in a disrupted world (Ayres 4).

For bourgeois middle class culture self-reformation was the key to institutional or collective discipline. They thought that it initiates at home because home is the place that constitutes our identity before entering into a public sphere while feminists consider home a prison (Langland,"Angels" 89). *The Daughters of England* and *The Wives of England* by Sarah Ellis were books written with a clear intention of enlightening girls and women to correct their flaws, and were considered as important guides to train them to have control over their husbands after marriage. Besides, Sarah Ellis while commenting on strict Victorian gender dynamics specifies the territory which ought to be occupied by males and the role of women in furthering man's prestige in social climbing. Men's focal sphere was warfare and women's concerns were domestic. The whole social set up was a sort of prison for her where she cannot even realize her potential if she has any.

The man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest whenever war is just, whenever conquest necessary. But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle,--and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision....Her great function is Praise: she enters into no

contest...But he guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, no temptation, no cause of error or offence. This is the true nature of home—it is the place of peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division.[“Of Queen’s Gardens,” by John Ruskin (1865)](qtd in S. Mitchell 266)

New Poor Law (1834) was another manifestation of contradiction inherent in the roles of women in the Victorian society. On the one hand, a woman was supposed to have physically fit body to be able to earn her living, while on the other hand, she ought to depend on her husband for bread winning to be considered respectable in the society (Clark 107). She should have characteristics exclusively feminine to qualify her for domestic obligations. Besides, there was such a strict demarcation along gender lines that women’s inherent human frailties were thought to be shocking peculiarities. She had to prove herself to be an epitome of perfection instead. There were articles, reviews, manuals, magazines and books prescribing appropriate behaviour for girls before and after marriage. ‘A room of one’s own was hard to find in the gilded cage, even in the happiest of marriages; a life of one’s own still harder’ (Perkin 257). ‘A room of one’s own’—a private space in which a woman is herself and feels free to withdraw from the world into her enclosed sanctuary—was emphasized even in the visual art and sculptural paintings by different authors of the Victorian age.

The Aesthetic Movement and the Women’s Club Movement substantiate the point that change was in the air between 1860 and 1870. These movements found a wide coverage in literature and journals read by the Victorian public. Women’s voice became audible through journal articles dealing exclusively

with reconstitution of domestic ideals. A popular periodical *The Art Interchange* combined aestheticism with household vocations. Such articles targeted even the clergymen as there was an outrageous resentment shown to a lecture delivered by Dr. Morgan Dix for limiting females' opportunities to home and deterring them from participation in public spheres, considering them unfit for marketplace. The authority of the ecclesiastical order and authors was questioned due to their latent bias against the fair sex. Dr. Dix was pronounced 'incompetent because he is an ecclesiastic.' and 'a worthy successor to that long line of men who have used their holy office to degrade womanhood' (Blanchard 40). The Aesthetic Movement, on the contrary, encouraged women to achieve self-fulfillment and satisfaction through refining their artistic skills by commercializing home-made objects and enhancing their scope in the marketplace.

Male authors generally used derogatory tone in their writings to sneer at women whose portraits evoked derision rather than sympathy. Women raised voice against those who labeled them as weak, inferior and physically unsuitable for certain tasks.

The habit of speaking sneeringly of women is one largely indulged in by men, and the little fictions they invent, and which they are pleased to label womanish characteristics, so please their sense of man's superiority that insist on their truthfulness when there exists no shadow of fact on which to base them (Blanchard 40).

Unlike men, women guilty of showing human frailty or emotional susceptibilities would be stigmatized and branded as fallen women. A woman of such a nature would bear the scarlet letter till her redemption either by

literal death or metaphorical death (psychic death). In the Victorian age, penitentiaries were established by Anglican sisters to provide shelter, clothing, and security to women who were fallen from the social status of being called respectable women. The institutes were headed by nuns who would accommodate prostitutes and victims of violence, and give them therapeutic treatment as well for moral elevation and social grooming.

At worst, as one sister admitted, the penitents could be perceived as “disagreeable, uninteresting, evil-tempered, low, and repulsive.”(15) Who were these “low and repulsive” women? Candidacy for a penitentiary was simple: to have fallen was to have had sexual intercourse with a man to whom one was not married. Some of the penitents were former street prostitutes, others had been kept mistresses, others had lived with men to whom they were not married (Mumm 527+).

The purpose of establishing these institutions was to inculcate refinement, cultural, social and religious values by bringing ‘fallen women’ in contact with those who were morally and intellectually superior in social strata of the society. Judith Knelman, in a magazine article “Women Murderers in Victorian Britain” argues that 'Deviant behaviour by men was deplorable; deviant behaviour by women was unacceptable' (Knelman 9+).

Gender dynamics permeated into art, paintings and fiction as well. Art and paintings in the Victorian age reveal contemporary bias against women, and their subordinate status in the society.

Many Victorian patriarchs saw women as lambs entrusted to their keeping. It was a relationship reinforced by many a church sermon, that a man was to see to his lamb in the same way that Christ was to tend his bride, the Church. This ideology is imaged in Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s painting *Found*. In the foreground crouches a woman whose illicit activity has obviously been “found out” by a young man who is probably

her brother or betrothed . Her face is one of abject sorrow; in another minute she may die of shame and despair. The face of the young man does not indicate censorship, only pity and sorrow. In the background is a cart on which stands a bleating pure white lamb that is not only significantly tethered, but also retained by a net. Those restraints symbolize patriarchal control, out of which the woman has slipped (Ayres 66).

Such a perception of women's role clearly shows their helplessness and the way they were fettered between natural impulses and social propriety. Their weakness was exploited and their womanhood was challenged in every walk of life. Discontent and frustration over the injustice of society was expressed by artists in sublimated form.

The Victorian patriarchal bias against women was manifested in the literary works of the famous authors of the age. Women's place and status in society shaped their attitudes, and majority of them were upholders of 'domestic Ideology' in keeping with the traditional view of women. Besides 'angel in the house', another icon that constituted the whole world for female folk was 'Home, hearth and heart' (Langland,"Angels"154). 'Victorian Lady Bountiful'⁵ and 'ladies of culture'⁶ were expressions taken up by almost all the authors of the age seriously.

In line with the general approach of the Victorians, the literature of the age also manifested the preoccupation of authors with class distinction, gender discrimination, and domestic versus sexual ideology. Dickens, George Eliot, Emily Bronte and Charlotte Bronte concerned themselves entirely with the social and moral issues of the age.

The woman was supposed to be soft, meek, quiet, modest, submissive, gentle, patient, and spiritual. The image of the ideal woman from this period has been described in Barbara Welter well known article "The Cult of True Womanhood," which defines feminine virtues as "piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity". She was the angel-in-the-house. The man was to be aggressive, assertive, rough although gentlemanly, tough-skinned, half controlled, and independent –able to compete well in the marketplace and to do his job as a citizen in a manly way and to rule his household (Ayres 4).

In the Victorian literature, women were drawn in black and white rather than as an amalgamation of both virtue and vice. The comic portraits or caricatures drawn by authors of the age, as is the case with Dickens's female caricatures, are an indication of women being considered as inferior and worthless creatures devoid of commanding respect.

Fielding made his heroes move according to the inspiration of his own personal taste, except that he tied a label on to them in order to make them acceptable to the virtuous public; but with Dickens current moral standards penetrated right into the heart of the novelist: his heroes are figures conceived in accordance with the neo-classicism which, in the bourgeois nineteenth century, inspired sepulchral monuments: they are angels with mild, stupid faces (Praz 136).

Dickens's women are either perfect angels, or absolutely evil. He portrays his women either perfect in management or absolute failures. In Langland's analysis, Dickens's women are portrayed in black or white. They are either skillful with managerial talents in house keeping with impeccable sense of propriety, or absolutely ignorant of their roles as women, hence leading to chaotic situation in domestic sphere and ultimate failure of men in public sphere. They are portrayed as absolutely deficient in their social demeanour. Dickens presents 'the stock figure of the woman of evil life (like Martha in

David Copperfield) who tries to redeem herself by performing a good action (Nancy)' (Praz 137).

Dickens focuses on women's role in domestic sphere and analyzes their contribution to society by becoming ideal wives or mothers. Women need to be trained in order to be of some use to society, but this training commences from domestic sphere. He disciplines his women in the course of events into better human beings whose job is to set things right and to establish order out of chaos (Langland, "Angels" 80-111).

Procuring luxury of life and middle class status remains an obsession with Dickens's females. In his fiction, the sole objective of women is to live up to the expectations of their husbands-to-be. They are presented as 'Home Goddesses' (qtd in Langland 107). In order to rise to respectability, a woman has to be a wife of a gentleman for whom she needs to be groomed, and her reformation is considered absolutely indispensable. Dickens's women serve as a means to social uprising for men, while men do the contrary.

Dickens's women cannot be considered as angels. The 'angels' he portrays are fit to be in heaven and misfit to be on earth. They can be categorized as fits or misfits, atypical or stereotypical. The broad canvass covers 'preferred women', 'she-dragons', 'aggerawayters' or 'agitating women' (Ayres 95). Brenda Ayres subverts the concept of domestic ideology in her book *Dissenting Women in Dickens' Novels*, and identifies certain inherent contradictions in Dickens's ideal of domesticity by classifying his angels.

Miss Havisham, in *Great Expectations*, is a particular victim of patriarchal culture who seeks her revenge upon male dominated society by training Estella into a snob. Her passion is retaliatory rather than based on the tender emotion of a female who is in love. She is biased against men after being victimized and exploited. A woman who fails to be an angel is severely punished by Dickens. He was so much obsessed with moral and social welfare that any lapse on the part of a woman, whose task is to make life worth living for all those around, is not forgiven in his world. "Dickens is the champion of the strictest orthodoxy; adultery has no charms for him. It might be said of him that he truly keeps in mind the precept of the puritan American professor Charles Eliot Norton, that 'no great work of the imagination had ever been based on illicit passion'"(Praz 127).

Dickens's novels present 'the exaltation of the domestic hearth' (Praz 137). He puts his angels on a pedestal, whom his men look up to. They are the guiding stars to steer men in the right direction. Whether we take into consideration Mario Praz's analysis of Dickens's novels or Elizabeth Langland's exploration of Dickens's 'angels of competence', we can infer from the readings of these authors that the word 'angel' never lost its currency even in feministic analysis of women.

George Eliot is considered as one of the objective, stern moralists who maintain distance from their creation, due to which she has been criticized by feminist critics. Her objective approach has contributed enormously to the truthful picture of the society as depicted in her novels. Her realism hardly offers any scope for her women to step out of their conventional roles. George

Eliot is associated with moral uplifting and social orthodoxy. “She diagnoses so brilliantly ‘the common yearning of womanhood’, and then cures it, sometimes drastically, as if it were indeed a disease” (Calder 158). She perceives a woman’s purpose of existence to be didactic in terms of moral uprisings. Despite Eliot’s over idealization of Dorothea in *Middlemarch* as a woman who is morally untainted and preoccupied with social welfare, Dorothea fails to rise above the status of wife (Langland, “Angels” 185).

Eliot’s Dorothea, when seen from the 20th century feminists perspective, fails to represent what is intended for her to represent. She fits in the role of ideal angel in the house instead. Dorothea has been given a limited freedom by Eliot who sees moral piety as the only means to salvation. She has an already defined space to realize her potential, yet some critics read vast, inherent possibilities in Dorothea’s character. “Susan Fraiman writes that she imagines ‘the way to womanhood not as a single path to a clear destination but as the endless negotiation of a crossroads’. Reflecting their individuality, women take differing paths, which are continuously reconfigured” (qtd in Piehler 5). Fallen women have never been treated kindly either by Dickens or Eliot, unlike Hardy whose Tess is pure according to the author himself, and who himself falls in love with her before any reader could appreciate his audacity in calling her ‘pure’. Unlike Dickens who doesn’t seem to appreciate passion especially after his excruciating experience of unsuccessful marriage with Catherine, Eliot does approve of passion, but only for the sake of moral elevation and for attaining spiritual piety.

A period of almost forty years was traversed by Angel-in-the-house of mid century to emerge as The New Woman of 1890s. This lapse of time changed the meaning of the word 'passion' as well which, in Victorian cultural perspective, could be the last characteristic to be found in a traditional woman. In Victorian culture, passion in women was a difficult thing to be put up with and was considered to be a sin (Calder 144). Intellect, linear and logical thinking are exclusively male's traits while passion ("a definite non angel-in-the-house trait") (Ayres 91). To think of passion and self- fulfillment, when woman's virtue was self-abnegation, was out of question.

The currency of the word 'passion' increased with the emergence of New Woman novels. The more the Victorians focused on the passionlessness of women, the more it became the dominating theme in the New Woman fiction. The saintly qualities of women were considered to be the asset of the cultural heritage.

Oliphant considered them, perhaps unfairly, to be single mindedly preoccupied with "'passion'(as if there was but one passion in the world!)" and perceived their political attack on the institution of marriage as fatally threatening not only to home life but to the personal happiness of women as well (Gillooly 400).

In 1830s and 1840s, the definition of femininity underwent a drastic change due to which home and domesticity assumed a new cultural and social meaning (Lloyd 87). Anna Jamson, a Victorian critic, seems to be bewildered by the question of determining feminine and masculine characteristics. The debatable issue is whether such attributes, as those, considered exclusively female are cultural or natural.

On the one hand, “a woman is no woman” without “modesty, grace, and tenderness”; on the other, she questions whether there really are “essentially masculine and feminine virtues and vices” or whether, “as civilization advances, those qualities which are now admired as essentially feminine will be considered as essentially human, such as gentleness, purity, the more unselfish and spiritual sense of duty, and the dominance of the affections over the passions” (qtd in Gillooly 395).

Passion finds its expression in the writings of Bronte sisters who wrote in the convention of the Victorian patriarchal orthodoxy. They recognize the devastating consequences of intense passion in the culture which appreciates its suppression as women's highest attribute. Women's longing for independent identities is met with a strong resistance on the part of patriarchy. *Wuthering Heights* is an exemplary novel based on the story of Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff. Catherine Earnshaw shares a common longing of Victorian women for existence beyond the restraints of patriarchal identity which leads to her ultimate destruction. The more she escapes from the confines of social taboos, the more she finds herself entangled in its mesh. Catherine couldn't assert herself in the wild atmosphere of her childhood home as well as the abode of her apparent refinement—her husband's house—Thrushcross Grange. Catherine wants her self-fulfillment beyond the confines of patriarchy, 'but the sense of being at home is continually deferred, and any domestic enclosure remains imprisoning' (Lamonica 96). Catherine is divided between her social and instinctual selves in the shape of her husband, Edgar Linton and her lover, Heathcliff. She is a supreme example of womanhood who can be defined as “the unutterable which man must forever continue to try to utter” (Jacobus 30). The mystery she contains in her person is beyond comprehension; otherwise, she would never have brought destruction upon herself and all

those around her. She is suffocated by the co-existence of her intense longing for Heathcliff and strict adherence to social propriety by not abandoning her husband. This division and the desire for self-realization bring her annihilation.

Patriarchal culture and dominance is represented by Hindley, Heathcliff and Edgar Linton. Catherine keeps longing for her selfhood beyond the signification of father, brother and husband. The names carved into the windowsill can be interpreted in post-modern structuralist context. She is eventually at ease with multiplicity of selves which may enable her to survive. The troubling question is what does she want? Perhaps she wants to be all in one or one in all.

The names that Lockwood discovers carved into the windowsill at Wuthering Heights can be interpreted in light of Catherine's protest against female identity exclusively determined by family relationships and irreversibly transferred from father to husband upon marriage. The writing, "a name repeated in all kinds of characters, large and small – Catherine Earnshaw, here and there varied to Catherine Heathcliff, and then again to Catherine Linton"(WH, 23), is not necessarily a young woman's attempt to weigh her choices in marriage against dependent daughterhood or sisterhood, or to question her true identity. Rather, the writing expresses her desire to be all Catherines at once...This inclusive identity is capable of incorporating all of the names, so expansive that to Lockwood "the air swarmed with Catherines (Lamonica 112-113).

It is difficult to determine whether Catherine is celebrating diversity of selves or showing her anxiety over not being able to combine all her smaller selves to contribute to her vital self. This effort at grasping the essence of her being by combining all discordant selves beyond the signification of patriarchy is frustrating, when viewed in the 19th century cultural and social milieu.

Female identity has always been determined by family and home in the Victorian culture. “‘Home’ in the novel is figured as a psychological and emotional state, a condition of self-fulfillment that is associated with domestic structures and kinship relations, but never actually realized in them”(Lamonica 96). Catherine’s passionate outbursts reveal the psychological turmoil through which she goes in her desperation to exist beyond walled prison be it her body or home. Any sort of enclosure proves to be consequential for her vital growth. This longing for womanhood is understood neither by her father, brother, husband nor even by her soul mate, Heathcliff.

Female identity, both in the late-eighteenth century Yorkshire setting of *Wuthering Heights* and in the mid-nineteenth century culture in which Emily Bronte wrote, was bound to a family. Women were socially recognized in their roles as daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers, leading to the now-popular designation of Victorian women as “relative creatures,” a term derived from Sarah Ellis’s 1839 conduct book *The Women of England* (Lamonica 95).

The absolute patriarchal control or assertion of cultural values appears to be the theme of *Jane Eyre*. Charlotte Bronte presents a picture of a tyrant Mr. Rochester who hires a governess, Jane, for his house keeping. The story can be interpreted as manifestation of power struggle between Mr. Rochester and Jane. Mr. Rochester is a domineering Byronic hero like Heathcliff. It is a master-slave equation—a tale of domination and submission in which Rochester is portrayed in the typical Victorian convention (Mitchell 44-45). Jane is drawn in the Victorian convention of being dependent upon Mr. Rochester for her sustenance and livelihood. Her occupation shows the limited opportunities available to women.

More so than perhaps any other mid-Victorian novelist, Brontë was concerned about the terrible price middle-class Victorian women had to pay for their recognition as moral beings, not creatures of reasonless passion. She addresses, particularly in *Shirley*, what Peter Cominos has identified as the central contradiction in the Victorian sexual ideology: the requirement that the middle-class lady deny her own body so as to body forth her culture's ideals, that she repress[sic] her sexual needs in order to emblemize the cultural ideal of innocence. Notably New Woman novelists do not require their heroines to submit to this contradiction. What Brontë and other mid-Victorian writers novelists view as a necessity, New Woman novelists view as "artificial," and therefore expendable (qtd in Ardis 86).

The irony of the Victorian era is that the more it emphasizes on domesticity, the greater seems to be the influence of environmental circumstances and extraneous variables in determining female's identity. Hardy's heroines fall short of having angelic attributes of the Victorian ideal of angel-in-the-house and emerge as instinctual rather than social beings. An elaborate study of Hardy's 'useless dolls' or 'Victorian anti-heroines' (Perkin 271) will be taken up in the succeeding chapter. However, here it is pertinent to note that unlike the prevalent angelic image of the Victorian women, his females can be collectively termed as predominantly 'seductive Eves'.

A woman is made to realize her inferiority even in feminist literary writings in the 20th century when she has already achieved some of her independence and realization of her unfulfilled desires. 'If the image of a woman writer's own room appeared so clearly and forcefully to Virginia Woolf in the early twentieth century, pieces of that image and explorations of that connection may have already been surfacing during the Victorian period (Piehler 2).

Notes

¹ 'Angel in the House' is a verse sequence written by Coventry Patmore. It became very popular during nineteenth century to sum up the virtues of ideal womanhood. The expression has been used in Elizabeth Langland's book *Nobody's Angels: Middle Class and Domestic ideology in Victorian Culture*.

² From " Fated Marginalization: Women and Science in the Poetry of Constance Naden." Patricia Murphy explores Naden's poetry for woman's positioning with respect to scientific thought and discovers passive female voice in a patriarchal culture. Consult P. 107+

³ Murphy uses the word 'unsexes' for a woman who transgresses the boundaries of feminine sphere by entering into a profession which is considered exclusively male occupation. She deprives herself of feminine charms hence becoming travestite.

⁴ Sally Mitchell. *Daily Life in Victorian England*. (listed)

⁵ K.D.Reynolds. *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Britain*. p. 91. 'The Lady Bountiful' is a legitimate object of popular resentment and literary satire. It has been used to allude to philanthropic contribution of the middle or upper class ladies in organizing Sunday Schools.

⁶ These expressions have been used by Linda Mahood in her essay "Family Ties: Lady Child Savers and Girls of the Street 1850-1925" to imply that in order to control street crimes in the 19th century, reformatories and industrial schools were established and were supervised by the ladies of upper class who were accomplished enough to inculcate moral values in girls prone to be victimized if left on the streets due to family's neglect or poverty. For further detail, consult p.42+

Chapter V

Seductive Eves: Image of Women in Hardy's Fiction

Generally, Hardy's female characters have been labeled as puppets—submissive, docile and compromising—in the hands of some unknown power. This impression was sustained until the 20th century research substantively changed it by bringing to limelight some hidden aspects of Hardy's women, projecting them as essentially revolting, brave and unconventional. Though obviously contrasting and conflicting, both these views help in achieving the hypothesis committed at the outset of this thesis.

Hardy's unusual fascination for women has evoked a debate among critics. They have found it hard to identify Hardy either with feminists or misogynists due to his diverse temperamental streaks and ambiguous state of mind. Despite the controversy on this count, his empathy with womenfolk leads some critics to recognize his literary feminism. A comparison of Hardy's fiction in early and later periods of his career shows a consistent evolution in depiction of women. His attitude might be called consistent as far as his philosophy of life is concerned; but when it comes to the question of women and their identity, there seems to be an incessant fluctuation in all respects. His later novels, particularly, seem to be reactionary, posing challenge and threat to the established norms. In order to explore the nature and causes of Hardy's unparalleled mastery in depiction of females, we need to go deep down into

the author's psychic complexities and the turmoil he went through in his real life.

Thomas Hardy was a man made out of words who was also particularly good at making women out of them. Indeed, Hardy may himself be figured as a Pygmalion of sorts who breathes fleshy life into female "phantoms of his own figuring (Neill 307).

In order to focus on Hardy's female characters, it is imperative to look at some peculiarities of his male characters first. Hardy's men are made up of the same stuff: they have endurance, fortitude, stoic resignation to destined doom. Some of them like Farmer Oak are subdued and passive in their constitution, while others like Dr. Fitzpiers, who have a tinge of urbanity in them, plunge into dangerous adventures (Wright 349).

The effect is that the men are refined sensualists and the women light-hearted coquets, who, in a search for personal admiration or fine shades of feeling, often become the victims of an overwhelming passion. Irresponsible, fascinating creatures, these 'children of a larger growth' are sometimes transfigured into incarnations of the tragic power of love, blind, disastrous and ineluctable in its working. As wayward as fate itself, they invade, for some light whim, the settled lives of men whose calmness is but the equilibrium of great powers, and leave them disordered. They are singularly apt to make the first advances; yet with all their eagerness for admiration they remain indifferent to the deep inarticulate devotion which they are at pains to excite. The tumult and not the depth of soul they approve, and thus they are won lightly by the voluble inconstant men whose failings they more innocently and weakly reflect (350) ¹

A keen reader of Hardy's major novels is quick to discover that his female characters are generally more appealing and arresting than their male counterparts. In his portrayal of women Hardy intends to demolish the 'doll of English fiction'² and seems bent upon investing them with tremendous strength, unconventionality, vitality, independence and intricacy of mind.

‘Hardy seemed to regard women as the most forceful, most vital, and most energetic of the sexes—large gravitational planets about whom men revolved like obedient but dimmer stars’ (Jekel 6).

Thomas Hardy’s continuing popularity, especially with readers who do not routinely read Victorian literature, results from the complex and powerful women characters he created. In the ongoing debate over whether male authors can create believable women characters or not, Hardy’s women often spring to mind as examples of intelligent, psychologically believable characters who have been created by a writer not only sympathetic to the situation of women in Victorian society but also surprisingly understanding of the subtle dynamics of sexual politics (Stave 23).

Hardy does away with the stereotypical image of women, which confines them to domestic obligations like childbearing and looking after husbands both physically and morally. Contrary to the society’s expectations, there is a whole range of queer women. On the one hand women like Tess, Sue, Bathsheba, Eustacia, Grace Melbury—who combine ‘modern nerves with primitive feelings’(WL 306)—startle the Victorian reader with their intricacies; while on the other hand Elizabeth-Jane, Thomasin, Marty South and Liza-Lu, presented with utmost simplicity, hardly pose any threat to the existing system of values. Between these two extremes falls a category comprising Mrs. Felice Charmond, Miss Aldclyffe, Arabella, and Lucetta—‘posing and self dramatizing *femme fatale*’(Boumelha 124), whose only creed is social prestige and ascendancy. ‘Hardy probably realized that after the Eustacias, Lucettas and Tesses have played out their tempestuous lives, it is the Thomasins, Elizabeth-Janes and Liza-Lus who survive to carry on the process of living—undramatically and unheroically’(Morgan 51).

Before examining Hardy's women of all these categories in detail, it would be pertinent to trace his intention and inclination to make them so. Hardy's queer nature seems to be the root cause of the eccentricities which we find in his female protagonists. His infatuation with fictional female characters may be attributed to his childhood associations with women in an unusual way.

Hardy's fictional females are modeled on those women whom he had met in real life. First of all, he came under the influence of Julia Augusta Martin at Bockhampton, whose affections he took in a strange way, due to which his mother felt alarmed and sent him to Dorchester, where subsequent emotional associations further testify the fact that Hardy got frequently entangled into romantic adventures. His liaisons with eccentric woman like Julia Augusta Martin at school and subsequent ardent passion for Tryphena Sparks, his cousin, can be considered his sentimental experiences accompanied with sexual inclinations. His emotional involvement with Emma leading to his unhappy marital tie; his haunting fancy for and devotion to Florence Henniker while married to Emma and his association with Gertrude compounded the intricacies of his perplexed mind. These emotional undertakings contributed substantively to moulding the image of women as that we see in his fiction. We have reason to believe that Clym's filial regard for Mrs. Yeobright may have its roots in Hardy's relationship with his mother, Jemima Hardy. 'Thomas Hardy suffered from a classic example of the too-close, too admiring mother/son relationship, and that this bond caused him to look for her image all of his life and to portray her often in his fiction' (Jekel 11). Sue Bridehead, Jude's cousin, might be considered as the replica of Tryphena Sparks, 'a

woman of Hardy's acquaintance' (Jekel 14). Moreover, his temperamental streaks, emotional constitution and romantic adventures enable us to trace the differences between his female protagonists and those portrayed by other Victorian novelists.

As already hinted, Hardy's female characters deviate from the ideal of conventional Victorian women in certain respects, psychic constitution among them. Philosophers, psychologists and critics have debated about social selves, public and private selves, but Hardy ventures into exploring natural self—the vital self—the suppression of which leads to devastating consequences. Hardy, being a keen observer of nature rather than society, presents his heroines in their natural colour and natural settings.

Mr. Hardy's way of regarding women is peculiar and difficult to define, not because it is not a perfectly defensible way, but because it is in a great degree new. It is, as we have already noted, far removed from a method, adopted by many distinguished novelists, in which women are considered as moral forces, centripetal tendencies providentially adapted to balance the centrifugal tendencies of men; being, indeed, almost the polar opposite to that view. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that it is equally removed from the method of those who are concerned to work out Tertullian's view of woman as *Janua diaboli*. Mr. Hardy's women's are creatures, always fascinating, made up of more or less untamed instincts for both love and admiration, who can never help some degree of response when the satisfaction of those instincts lies open to them (Ellis 126).

Dissenting women in Hardy's novels show streaks of modernism, and their sexual ideology defeats the concept of domestic ideology. His text betrays what he tries to conceal for protecting himself against the public assault. The Victorian conception of domestic ideology is upheld as sacred by Victorian novelists, and social identity is of paramount importance for them as

elaborated in the previous chapter. The sanctity of domestic sphere is kept intact by the upholders of Victorian ideals of womanhood. But in Hardy it is the social 'Other' that is bent upon negating what is essentially vital in women folk. Apparently there is hardly any society to check the natural impulses, yet it is perpetually there even in its non-existence to frustrate the growth of natural self.

Instead of focusing on the pettiness of women's lives, Hardy's heroines rise above the petty concerns of mundane, worldly origin. In contrast to the Victorian angels, who camouflage their true identity beneath the cold shell of social propriety, stand Hardy's idiosyncratic femme fatale—embodiment of death and destruction—as they contain storm in their constitution difficult to be fettered in social conventions. All that a reader remembers of Hardy's novels is either the 'Queen of Night' (RN 76) as in *The Return of the Native*, a neurotic Sue in *Jude the Obscure*, Tess's resistance in the midst of adverse circumstances, or Bathsheba's defiance towards male authority. "Hardy's Tess leaves us with a troubling question: pushed to the margins by misogyny and sexism, is a strong woman's only choice her own destruction?" (Roy 279). Lascelles Abercrombie was justified in his assertion that '...there is no tragedy where there is no resistance' (Abercrombie 22). The more Tess, Sue, Bathsheba, and Eustacia show resistance, the more confidence and courage they get for fighting against all odds.

Among Hardy's females, there is hardly a woman—from Cytherea to Sue—who doesn't voice her opinion on orthodoxy of Victorian conventions. Hardy articulates his views on the orthodoxy of society through his women, and they

express his notions on the fettered impulses of an individual. In *Desperate Remedies*, Cytherea gives voice to her rejection of social norms due to which a woman is tied to patriarchal signification and makes sacrifices at every turn of her life. When Owen (Cytherea's brother) tries to persuade her to get married to Mr. Manston by reminding her of her duty to those around her, she replies:

‘Yes- my duty to society,’ she murmured. ‘But ah, Owen, it is difficult to adjust our outer and inner life with perfect honesty to all! ... And perhaps, that they blamed me so soon. And they will pause just for an instant, and give a sigh to me, and think, “Poor girl!” believing they do great justice to my memory by this. But they will never, never realize that it was my single opportunity of existence, as well as of doing my duty, which they are regarding; they will not feel that what to them is but a thought, easily held those two words of pity, “Poor girl!” was a whole life to me; as full of hours, minutes, and peculiar minutes, of hopes and dreads, smiles, whispering, tears, as theirs: that it was my world, what is to them their world, and they in that life of mine, however much I cared for them, only the thought I seem to them to be. Nobody can enter into another's nature truly, that's what is so grievous (DR 203).

The cult of true womanhood is challenged covertly, if not overtly, in almost all of Hardy's novels. “His novels are what he himself might have called ‘retaliatory fictions’- a phrase annexed from words Grace Melbury uses to maximize discomfort in her erring husband in *The Woodlanders*”(Neill 309). Even a woman like Mrs. Charmond, despite her apparent disregard for social propriety, comments on the callousness of conventions in her outburst to Dr. Fitzpiers:

Then, when my emotions have exhausted themselves, I become full of fears, till I think I shall die for very fear. The terrible insistencies of society—how severe they are, and cold, and inexorable—ghastly towards those who are made of wax and not of stone. O, I am afraid of them; a stab for this error, and a stab for that—correctives and regulations pretendedly framed that society may tend to perfection—an end which I don't care

for in the least. Yet for this all I do care for has to be stunted and starved (WL 204-205).

Hardy's exceptional women do not live up to the expectations of the society. They are indifferent to its pretension or artifice. Instead of being house makers, they seem to be destroyers of houses as well as of men. None of them seems to be a household angel or an excellent wife. Their vital self is untainted by falsity and hypocrisy. They are not shown engaged or involved in the management of household affairs or keeping servants in place; they are never at ease with their existing status and try to establish identity beyond that prefigured for them by the society. They find it next to impossible to be true to themselves while conforming to social laws. Their personal identity is divorced from their social self. Being vocal about their views in certain respects detach them from their Victorian background and invest them dimensions characteristically modern.

The portrayal of Sue and her unorthodox notions on marriage offended Victorian public because *Jude the Obscure* carried the germs of the prospective New Woman fiction.

Like other New Women, Sue Bridehead is brilliant, intellectually daring, self-consciously unconventional, proudly modern. She calls herself a pagan, scoffs at Jude's pieties, and has lived alone in London, mixed with men "almost as one of their own sex", and even shared lodgings, platonically, with an undergraduate. She regards marriage as a barbaric institution that reduces women to property and love to contract (Deresiewicz 56+).

In *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy not only mocks the institution of marriage, but also explicitly advocates illicit relationship or sex outside of marriage. Sue expresses her notion on marriage in no unclear terms. She considers it adultery

when a woman does not love her husband and continues living with him due to the dread of conventions. Her living with Phillotson shows her apparent regard for propriety but she actually finds it detestable to continue living in a legalized prostitution under the label of marriage.

A young woman living a conventionally secure home life is a rarity in Hardy's novels; when his heroines marry they do so on the whole by their own, not their parents', choice. Thus if marriages go wrong and in Hardy's novels they usually do- the responsibility is placed squarely with the participants, and since it is generally the woman who has chosen unwisely from among several possible suitors, it is she who has to seek a solution. In the end this is condensed by Sue Bridehead into forceful opposition to marriage as an institution (Cunningham 85).

Hardy's femme fatales do not see marriage primarily as a solution to their problems; rather it poses a threat to the growth of a natural self. They can live as mistresses of their lovers more comfortably than become mistresses of the household. They are in pursuit of sexual adventures with men other than their husbands. They do not have moral scruples when they seek self-fulfillment; they enjoy illicit relationships more than socially acceptable course of marital ties. Bathsheba in *Far from the Madding Crowd* plays a prank on Farmer Boldwood by writing him a letter on the eve of St. Valentine's Day containing two words 'Marry Me' when she was 'no schemer of marriage, nor was she deliberately a trifler with the affections of men, and a censor's experience on seeing an actual flirt after observing her would have been a feeling of surprise that Bathsheba could be so different from such a one, and yet so like what a flirt is supposed to be...' (FFMC 141).

Possessing and keeping alive intense passions is vital for Hardy's conception of women. His heroines prefer to live in a moment of ecstasy to eternal monotony of marital tie. The obligation of marriage that extinguishes all passion is unacceptable to them. Hardy projects his 'idea of woman's enfranchisement by creating character types such as Eustacia Vye, Tess and Sue Bridehead that reflect the various stages of the struggle for freedom' (Hyman 32).

Hardy's women destroy rather than support men at critical junctures. They exploit their femininity to entrap men: they are manipulative and certain of their skills of entrapment. Women in Hardy's fiction ignite the flame, which excites and entices men. 'His early efforts in fiction to undermine Victorian attitudes were hampered by censorship but as an established novelist he championed the struggle of the strong, intelligent, sexual woman to achieve selfhood and social freedom' (Harvey 34). Some critics consider Hardy's women as victims whereas for others they are 'sexual destroyers' (Boumelha 4). Penny Boumella explores the nature of Hardy's female protagonists from the angle of sexual ideology. They are the root cause of misery and sorrows of the world and 'tools of the life force' (ibid 4). They are the ones who take the hold and manipulate men. Men, in Hardy's world, have passive attitudes; they are lacking in exuberance while women are endowed with vitality of life. Jude Fawley, Clym Yeobright, Farmer Oak and Giles Winterborne maintain a passive attitude.

Hardy does not create passive heroines, (there is no Caroline Helstone among them, for example, nor does he shy away from exploring erotic relations. In his frankness about sexual issues he

is by far the most modern and least Victorian of the authors in my study, chafing against the restrictive literary conventions of his day and holding no such brief for Victorian transcendence as George Eliot does, for example. Love is no romantic Panacea in Hardy's novels; it can go flat and stale, and in typical twentieth century fashion it can botch people's lives. Women fit into this scenario uneasily, sometimes wreaking the havoc, sometimes having it wrought upon them. But they are often active participants in the erotic paradigm, despite their objectification at the level of semiotic analysis (J.Mitchell 160-161).

Hardy's women pursue their natural urges in order to achieve sexual autonomy while mocking the double social and sexual standards of the Victorian society. They, according to many critics, seem to advocate sexual ideology and illicit relationships. In their effort to bring destruction upon men, they themselves meet the same end (Boumelha 4). Tess becomes destructive when Angel finds her a changed person after her confession of being seduced by Alec. Angel tells her clearly that she is no more what he thought her to be—he rejects her for what she is. 'Tess is a tragic victim of a division of self, her division results from being victimized by the narrow moral standards of her society rather than from any condemnable flaw in herself' (Gutierrez 33).

Tess's natural affinity is with Alec as he is her natural husband while it is only her 'I'—her moral or social being—that is bound to Angel. Angel is not pure either; he lacks animal warmth which Alec has in abundance and which is why Tess feels fulfillment with Alec. 'Lacking animal warmth, physical "appetite," he [Angel] can be ruthless when his basic conventionalness is threatened' (Gutierrez 36-37). Tess doesn't consider her seduction and its consequences as unpardonable. She expects forgiveness assuming that if her husband's

diversion with a woman for forty eight hours in London can be overlooked and forgiven, then why not hers? She forgets that the one who confesses it and considers it to be his folly, is male. His is a folly while hers is a sin. While confessing, Angel says with perfect ease, 'Happily I awoke almost immediately to a sense of my folly,' which after eight and forty hours, 'might strike one as a rather slow immediateness' (Gutierrez 28-29). To the reader's understanding, the word 'Happily' hardly leaves any room for Angel to feel moral pangs and it hardly reflects his regrets over the past conduct. He does not feel compassion even for a woman with whom he spends forty-eight hours.

Hardy's female protagonists are coquettes who propel men's desire; they do not wait for men to initiate their sexuality. They practice manipulative tactics to exploit men to their advantage. Such coquettes are of central interest to Hardy. They are provocative who are well aware of their feminine charms, intricate sexually as well as psychologically. Moral concerns do not bother them when they make choices; and conscience has very little role to play when they are determined to achieve their ends. Arabella's art of producing false dimples in her cheeks to entice Jude towards herself is worth observing, though some of the critics abhor her for using this tactic against a man who is so naïve. Such episodes are quite unpleasing and repulsive to the palate of readers with refined and exquisite tastes.

As the girl drew near to it, she gave, without Jude perceiving it, an adroit little suck to the interior of each of her cheeks in succession, by which curious and original manoeuvre she brought as by magic upon its smooth and rotund surface a perfect dimple, which she was able to retain there as long as

she continued to smile. This production of dimples at will was a not unknown operation, which many attempted, but only a few succeeded in accomplishing (Jude 59-60).

Jude is distracted altogether from his scholarly aim of getting into Christminster by her frivolous behaviour. After destroying his career, Arabella deserts him for another man for social climbing.

Mrs. Felice Charmond's artificiality and maneuvering is revealed by her borrowing a lock of hair from Marty South—a pure rustic girl—to lure men into loving her. She doesn't have moral scruples when she realizes that she is trying to embitter Grace's marital life by seducing her husband. Hardy portrays this class of cunning women who have learnt worldly wisdom by their practical experiences over a period of time. When Dr. Fitzpiers visits Mrs. Charmond in Hintock, she shows a deep insight into the psychology of men. While recalling the good old times spent with him during their brief acquaintance in the past, she says, 'Women are always carried about like corks upon the waves of masculine desire' (WL 197). Further, she expresses her apprehension when she states her purpose of coming to Hintock that it 'has the curious effect of bottling up the emotions till one can no longer hold them; I am often obliged to fly away and discharge my sentiments somewhere, or I should die outright'(WL 197). Like Hardy's other passionate women, Mrs. Charmond calls for Dr. Fitzpiers on the pretext of her minor accident which is not of that serious nature; she entices Fitzpiers by exposing her 'full round arm' to show a little mark of wound. Like Lucetta, she is aware of her reputation among folk at Hintock in whose opinion she is considered either an atheist or a blasphemer. According to Dr. Fitzpiers, she has been successful in

rekindling the colossal passion which was nipped in the bud, yet she does not like to be considered a coquette by him. She has the ability of lapsing ‘into the frivolous archness under which she hid passions of no mean strength—strange, smouldering, erratic passions, kept down like a stifled conflagration, but bursting out now here, now there—the only certain element in their direction being its unexpectedness’ (WL 201).

Hardy’s insight into the type of women represented by Mrs Charmond, Miss Aldclyffe and Lucetta is astonishing. Miss Aldclyffe seems to be a rich, experienced lady who is skilled in putting up a show of falsity. She has lost her lover, Cytherea’s father, whose miniature she wears in her gold locket, due to ‘excess of honesty’ regarding her past. She discloses her secret to Cytherea unknowingly: the conversation in her bedroom reveals not only her past association but also throws light on her character. She has learnt from experience that women have to be deceptive at times to safeguard their interest though she longs to be ‘artless and innocent’ once again at the age of forty six. She takes fancy to Cytherea assuming her to be ‘artless’ and ‘like a fresh spring meadow’ but after discovering the secret of Cytherea’s love for Edward she feels disgusted and equates her with ‘a dusty highway’ (DR 67-68) like herself. Miss Aldclyffe shows her experience in her judgment of men when she tells Cytherea that for a man, whom Cytherea loves with all her intensity and whose identity she is trying to conceal, she is ‘but a temporary link in a long chain of others’ and will have ‘little day as they have had theirs’ (DR 68) and that ‘the love of an inconstant man is ten times more ardent than that of a faithful man—that is, while it lasts.’ (DR 70)

Hardy repeats the image of this class of women in the character of Lucetta which is drawn in the same tradition. Lucetta's lack of integrity surfaces when she abandons the declining Michael Henchard and associates herself with Farfrae—a young, promising youth of immense shrewdness and acumen in conducting business transactions. She comes all the way from Jersey to reside at Casterbridge to establish herself before restoring her connections with Michael Henchard. She intimates to him her plan of halting there just to see him on her way, but on hearing about the death of Susan (Henchard's wife), she alters her mind and takes her lodging at High-Place Hall as a tenant. She takes her aunt Templeman's name to conceal her identity to escape from her past as she confesses in her letter to Henchard. While referring to her manoeuvring with Elizabeth Jane, Henchard describes Lucetta as 'the artful little woman' (MC 221)³. She is 'a dark-haired, large eyed, pretty woman, of unmistakably French extraction on one side or the other' (221).

Hardy reveals infidelity of such women by the transitory nature of their passion. Lucetta seeks her union with Henchard partly to set matters right between them, though there is not much warmth left in her passion when she comes to reside at High-Place Hall. Had there been any sentimental attachment, she would not have switched over from Henchard to Farfrae in such a short time. She considers her passion for Henchard her girlish fancy once she sets her eyes on Farfrae. She takes fancy to Farfrae in their first meeting when he actually comes over to see Elizabeth-Jane with Henchard's consent for courtship.

Lucetta, like her other counterparts, is quick to stir feelings, and then becomes 'indifferent to the achievement' (MC 236). Being an ambitious woman, she recognizes in Farfrae her own future prospects. She is triumphant in entrapping Farfrae, and puts him off the track the moment she sets her eyes on him. Farfrae's eyes hang on the woman 'who could boast of a more Protean variety in her phases, moods, opinions, and also principles, than could Elizabeth'(MC 246). Her assertion that 'Dear me, I feel I have demoralized you!'(MC 235) seems to be justified as Farfrae is mesmerized on his visit and forgets his purpose altogether. 'She had enkindled the young man's enthusiasm till he was quite brimming with sentiment...'(MC 235). Knowing her reputation thoroughly, she cautions Farfrae right on his departure: 'You may hear them speak of me in Casterbridge as time goes on. If they tell you I'm a couquette, which some may, because of the incidents of my life, don't believe it, for I am not' (MC 235).

These eccentric and queer women appeal to Hardy; such 'Seductive Eves' populate Hardy's fictive world. They are women with free spirits in a society conditioned by a severe moral code.

Hardy had no patience with traditional demands for purity in women, and with *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* he got himself into serious trouble for saying so. In fact he was always pushing his readers to the limits of their tolerance about sexual matters (Cunningham 88-89).

Hardy does not let his heroines seek spiritual piety in the cultural sense. They are human rather than angelic, and that is why Mrs. Oliphant criticizes Hardy for being a preacher and a propagandist for 'free love'. Mrs. Oliphant

Margaret's reviews of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* reflect her impatience with the morality Hardy projects in these novels.

Doubtless to the guardians of public morality in the nineties it must have appeared intolerable that to the injury of making a girl like Tess the heroine of a novel there should have been added the insult of calling her 'a pure woman' (Duffin 218).

Tess resists taking on the prescriptive identity of a fallen woman and seems to scream out in her actions, 'I do not argue my right to sexual freedom; I know it, I proclaim it, I take it in the face of all the world! Stretch me on social racks, roast me on social gridirons, apply your social thumb-screws till every nerve quivers Do your worst, you cannot fix the scarlet letter on my breast.'⁴

When we refer to the Victorian ideal of womanhood, it has a set of values and expectations attached to it. It was incumbent upon women not only to take care of the house and maintain the sanctity of marital relationship, but also to be very particular in their outer demeanor as well. Victorian etiquettes demanded of a woman that she should be extremely decorous and particular regarding her drapery to look lady-like or mistress of the house.

Hardy's heroines deviate from conforming to this social ideal of lady-like attitude and attire of ideal Victorian heroine in his two novels *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *Jude the Obscure*. Elfride in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* makes rope of her undergarments to rescue her lover and is left with drapery which is already wet and clings to her skin showing her body contours distinctly. Elfride rushes homeward in wet clothes irrespective of the fact that it is extremely un-lady-like to be in clothes clung to the skin in Victorian moral code of ethics. Sue

deliberately rejects and violates artifice of civility by putting on Jude's clothes while drying up her wet clothes in the hotel's room and taking an identity that does not conform to the Victorian ideal of womanhood. She doesn't once think of impropriety of such an exchange. Eustacia disguises herself as a mummer to call upon Mrs. Yeobright where Clym, who gets influenced by her unconventional demeanour, recognizes her. These episodes are significant to reflect their unconventionality; these examples can be cited as distinct deviations from restraints of conventionality. Elfride and Bathsheba defy their images as Victorian women by riding horses; they are doomed because they break the boundaries of culture and do not abide by social laws.

Unlike his contemporary novelists in whose works moral or spiritual piety becomes the focus of our attention, Hardy emphasizes the physicality of women to make his readers visualize even the pores of their skin. Their veins, stains, arms, fingers, mouths, lips, eyes, body contours, voluptuousness—all are under perpetual observation and portrayed with utmost meticulousness. 'Alec's rape of Tess and her subsequent capitulation to him, which lead to pregnancy, will later be blamed by both Alec and Angel on Tess' red mouth, womanly figure, and passionate nature'(Roy 278).

Hardy's obsession with the physical aspect of women finds its true expression in the portrayal of Tess whose description irresistibly mesmerizes the reader. Tess is portrayed in sensual terms at full length. Her physical attraction can be visualized from the hints dropped randomly throughout the novel : “‘full round arm’, ‘plump vulnerable flesh’, ‘round bare arms’, ‘madder stains on her skin’, the blue vein of her temple’, ‘the inside vein of her soft arm’, the

sun slanting in ‘upon her inclining face, upon the blue veins of her temple, upon her naked arm, and her neck, and into the depths of her hair’” (Tanner 188-198). Besides, Hardy describes their effect upon the observer—Angel—who is tempted not only to kiss them, but also longs to own these priceless possessions. Moreover, Hardy frequently alludes to the arms, the temple and the veins of women. Dr. Fitzpiers could not resist putting his lips to the scar to dampen the plaster on Mrs. Charmond’s arm once the opportunity offers itself when Mrs. Charmond exposes her arm. It is then when Mrs. Charmond asks: ‘Is that blue vein still in my temple that used to show there? The scar must be just upon it. If the cup had been a little deeper it would have spilt my hot blood indeed!’ (WL 199).

Hardy’s description of the bodies of his characters reflects a blend of his imaginative and observational skills. In portraying his females, Hardy makes use of unusual imagery to create the desired picture. The following passage validly substantiates this point.

She had Pagan eyes, full of nocturnal mysteries, and their light, as it came and went, and came again, was partially hampered by their oppressive lids and lashes; and of these the underlid was much fuller than it usually is with English women...Assuming that the souls of men and women were visible essences, you could fancy the colour of Eustacia’s soul to be flame-like.

The mouth seemed formed less to speak than to quiver, less to quiver than to kiss.

Some might have added, less to kiss than to curl...So fine were the lines of her lips that, though full, each corner of her mouth was as clearly cut as the point of a spear.

This keenness of corner was only blunted when she was given over to sudden fits of gloom, one of the phases of the night-side of sentiment which she knew too well for her years.

Her presence brought memories of such things as Bourbon roses, rubies, and tropical midnights; her moods recalled lotus-eaters and the march in 'Athalie'; her motions, the ebb and flow of the sea; her voice, the viola..." (RN 76-77).

Hardy's vivid description of Eustacia brings before the reader's eye a woman incredibly sensuous with inherent wildness, full limbed and soft to touch, the possessor of provocative body contours with the darkness of her tresses difficult to be contained in words or imagination. The sensuality of her mouth is over emphasized and the mystery of her soul is made visible by giving it flame-like colour.

Hardy's description of women contains a predominant element of sensuality. His femme fatales are of flesh and blood, and are described in 'fleshy terms'—the term which Brenda Ayres uses for Dickens's women, some of whom could not be conceived in 'fleshy terms' (Ayres 23). Arabella is introduced in fleshy terms as a woman with animal instincts.

She had a round and prominent bosom, full lips, perfect teeth, and the rich complexion of a Cochin hen's egg. She was a complete and substantial female animal – no more, no less; and Jude was almost certain that to her was attributable the enterprise of attracting his attention from dreams of the humaner letters to what was simmering in the midst around him (Jude 59).

Hardy exempts most of his women altogether from wifely and motherly obligations. They are usually portrayed as lonesome, solitary figures. Hardy does not show his heroines to be indulged in motherly activities, looking after their children or fulfilling their needs as if he is 'uncomfortable with mothers' (Stave 132).

Arabella, Sue and Tess are shown as mothers; but 'Hardy usually averts his narrative gaze from them in the act of caring for their children' (Stave 132). Hardy may have developed this tendency due to his own childlessness. Sue voices his opinion regarding childbearing.

Sue anticipates Hardy by a decade when she declares to Jude that 'in a proper state of society, the father of a woman's child will be as much a private matter of hers as the cut of her under-linen, on whom nobody will have any right to question her' ...Phyllotson completely floors Gillingham (and surely Hardy's 1896 readership) by proposing 'Matriarchy': 'I don't see why the woman and the children should not be the unit without the man' (Dutta 119).

Elizabeth Langland would surely have included Hardy's angels in her book *Nobody's Angels and Middle-Class Women and Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture*, had there been any in Hardy's world. His heroines seem to fit in the Freudian perspective rather than stereotypical Victorian perspective. They are neither angels nor paragons of virtue nor 'she-dragons' (Ayres 83) of Dickens. They appear calm, composed, docile, submissive, and silent to a casual reader, yet hardly fit in the role of angel-in-the-house. They are invested with the urge to live their lives on their own terms and conditions. They are least bothered about their reputation, and it hardly matters to them if they are called evil, witches, fallen, unconventional or neurotic. They are rebellious not only against the norms of the society but religion as well. Hardy's heroines do not hold Calvinistic beliefs; they are non-conformists or hedonists. They keep oscillating between Pagan and Christian views of life.

The rejection or avoidance of conventional wife- and motherhood is only one way these women claim individuality. Another is their skepticism about or rejection of organized religion. Part of women's conformity to societal expectations in

western culture has involved their role as moral exemplars. In western Christian tradition, piety and virtue have been inextricably linked as requirements for female behavior, as if women were to atone perpetually for the sin of Eve (Walker 286).

In Hardy's females peculiarities are generally maximized to the extent of abnormalities. Eustacia is considered as deviant in her demeanour. Many critics consider Sue neurotic and Tess an outcast. In the portrayal of Eustacia Vye, Hardy projects his image of a marginalized woman due to her psychological peculiarities. Eustacia embodies the image of a woman rebellious to the core of her being and a non-conformist in her religious belief. She always flows against the tide almost in everything. She is up when others are asleep, and she is at rest when others get to work. She reads The Bible on weekdays and sings psalms on Saturday nights. She doesn't believe in organized religion. She hates Sundays when everything is at rest, and on labour days she is at rest. 'She is not the initially triumphant hero, Oedipus or Agamemnon, but the bitterly enduring hero, Milton's Satan or Shelley's Prometheus...She is emblematic of the feeling and infinite desire which rebel against inevitable limitation...' (Deen 122).

Havlock Ellis in "Thomas Hardy's Novels' Westminster Review April 1883" explores the complex nature of Eustacia and identifies certain flaws in her character responsible for her annihilation:

For the great flaw in Eustacia's nature—the cause of that want of adaptation to her environment which we soon see will make life impossible to her—lies in this lack of discipline. Mr. Hardy characterizes her well as 'a rebellious woman'. She was 'the raw material of a divinity.....And with her passionate and abstract desire for love, her greedy egotism, her 'instincts towards social nonconformity', her outcries against destiny, we soon learn how ill able she must ever be to carry on adequately

that complex and continuous adaptation of internal relations to external relations, which is life. Superficially she was timid; it was beneath that timidity that her stronger and more rebellious spirit dwelt. It is easy to see how hard it was for a woman thus morally featured to be sincere (Ellis 118-119).

Impulse and instinct play incredible role in determining the destinies of Hardy's women. They act on impulse and succumb to their dominating instinct rather than reason. Instinct rules over reason due to which they make fatal mistakes detrimental to others as well as to themselves. Irving Howe comments on Hardy's ability of 'creeping intuitively into the emotional life of women' and 'his openness to the feminine principle'(qtd in Boumelha 3).

Hardy may be seen as a nascent 'feminist' in his obvious sympathy for Tess' victimization by men, yet his ambiguous portrayal of how freely Tess chooses, not once but twice, to live with Alec as his mistress complicates his heroine beyond poster girl for simple victimhood (Roy 277).

Hardy's conception of women embodies a strong sense of selfhood, particularly perceptible in those who are classified as fallen by the society. Hardy's fallen women are never non-entities. They are adamant in a sense that they adhere to their surnames or family lineage even after getting married. It seldom happens that they conceal their birth or ancestry. In Victorian society, marital tie made a lot of difference to the identity of women, but they refuse to take the identity imposed upon them.

One encounters allusions throughout Tess to the Durbeyfield-peasant and Durberville-aristocrat strain, and witnesses how these discrete selves are—often falsely—identified and projected by other key characters. But the real Tess, the tragic figure, is another Tess, so complex a mixture of "Durbeyfield" "Durberville" as to suggest that the essential Tess is above class (Gutierrez 30).

Sue's example can also be quoted here who is uncomfortable with the status of being called Mrs. Phillotson: 'I am called Mrs. Phillotson, living a calm

wedded life with my counterpart of that name. But I am not really Mrs. Phillotson, but a woman tossed about all alone, with aberrant passions, and unaccountable antipathies' (Jude 226).

Tess, Sue, Bathsheba, and Eustacia are not representative of the Victorian age: all of them strive for self-realization and self-fulfillment. They desperately want to experience the feeling of being alive in the society, which is bent upon suppressing their identity. They go through heart-breaking experiences of life, and are torn between opposite psychic forces in the course of self-evolution. They come in clash with the male-dominated society. The environment is not conducive for them to establish their identity beyond patriarchal hold.

Eustacia, Tess or Sue—what was there in their position that was necessarily tragic? Necessarily painful it was, but they were not at war with God, only with Society. Yet they were all cowed by the mere judgment of man upon them, and all the while by their own souls they were right. And the judgment of men killed them, not the judgment of their own souls or the judgment of Eternal God (Lawrence 20).

Hardy's genius takes into account not only the intricate class of women already discussed but also those standing at the opposite extreme in order to highlight the dual reality of life. In the character delineation of Elizabeth-Jane, Thomasin and Marty South, Hardy presents his image of women commonplace in their constitution. They accept destiny and change without the least resistance; hence they sail through life with perfect objectivity. They are matter-of-fact persons and do not aspire for ideals beyond their approach; they do not seek to transcend the boundaries of time and space. Once disappointed with their cherished dreams, they settle in their new role with ease and comply with the demands of the situation. Elizabeth-Jane and

Thomasin have enough pragmatism and vision to go for marriage of convenience rather than looking for an ideal sort of relationship. Elizabeth-Jane, Thomasin, Marty-South, Liza-Lu are too unworldly to pose any threat to their own existence or to any other human being in their interaction with the society. As they plainly understand their own significance in the scheme of universe; hence they wage no war against society, destiny or God. Elizabeth-Jane gives up her claim on Farfrae's love easily because she precisely knows her worth in comparison to Lucetta. She takes Farfrae's desertion of her as natural, by simply reflecting over the facts: "What was she beside Lucetta?—as one of the 'meaner beauties of the night' when the moon had risen in the skies" (MC 250).

Hardy attributes filial regard to those who are the children of calm rather than storm. They have the ability to see their hopes crumbling to the ground and start living with it. Hardy's authorial commentary on Elizabeth-Jane is illuminating:

She had learnt the lesson of renunciation, and was as familiar with the wreck of each day's wishes as with the diurnal setting of the sun. If her earthly career had taught her few book philosophies it had at least well practised her in this. Yet her experience had consisted less in a series of pure disappointments than in a series of substitutions. Continually it had happened that what she had desired had not been granted her, and that what had been granted her she had not desired (MC 250-251).

Duffin credits Hardy for bringing "Elizabeth-Jane to 'unbroken tranquillity', although her youth had 'seemed to teach that happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain'"(254). Thomasin has enough common sense to get settled with Diggory Venn, once she becomes a widow after being

betrayed by her husband, Wildeve. Hardy illuminates Marty South's character in the concluding passage of *The Woodlanders* in a convincing tone. She remains stable and consistent throughout the novel with no aspiration to rise above her earthly existence. She is all goodness and humility incarnate, and recognizes these virtues in others. While standing by the grave of her lost love, Giles Winterborne, she shows glimpses of sublimity. In her unwavering fidelity, she opens up her heart.

You are mine, and only mine; for she has forgot 'ee at last, although for her you died! But I—whenever I get up I'll think of 'ee, and whenever I lie down I'll think of 'ee again...If ever I forget your name let me forget home and heaven!...But no, no, my love, I never can forget 'ee; for you was a good man, and did good things! (WL 380).

The last one of this group of commonplace women is Liza-Lu. She represents that non-rebellious part of Tess which can be easily accommodated by Angel, and is readily integrated in the society. Tess recommends her to Angel and wishes her to become his wife, who can be trained to perform that role befittingly. Liza-Lu, 'half-girl, half-woman—a spiritualized image of Tess'(ToD 462) is seen hand in hand with Angel Clare to draw the curtain of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Whereas life offers limited options to Tess, it holds a prospect of unlimited possibilities for Liza-Lu. She is from among those survivors due to whom the show goes on. In the closing scene of the novel, Angel and Liza-Lu—'the two speechless gazers'(ToD 464)—view the tower where Tess is to be hanged with objectivity, and walk onward.

D. H. Lawrence's evaluation of Hardy's women that they try to come into being and therein lies the tragedy, seems to be justified. It is the split in their

psychic constitution that makes his characters suffer, as they are far above the average mass of humanity satisfied with its lot, and do not aspire to be more than what they are in social and natural hierarchy. Throwing aside socially established norms or being indifferent to them is a testimony of such people being idiosyncratic in their make up. Retaliation is inborn and it cannot be taken out of them unless they are willing to pay the price.

This is the tragedy of Hardy, always the same: the tragedy of those who, more or less pioneers, have died in the wilderness, whither they had escaped for free action, after having left the walled security, and the comparative imprisonment, of the established convention. This is the theme of novel after novel: remain quite [sic] within the convention, and you are good, safe, and happy in the long run, though you never have the vivid pang of sympathy on your side: or, on the other hand, be passionate, individual, wilful, you will find the security of the convention a walled prison, you will escape, and you will die, either of your lack of strength to bear the isolation and the exposure, or by direct revenge from the community, or from both. This is the tragedy, and only this: it is nothing more metaphysical than the division of a man against himself in such a way: first, that he is a member of the community, and must, upon his honour, in no way move to disintegrate the community, either in its moral or its practical form; second, that the convention of the community is a prison to his natural, individual desire (Lawrence 10-11).

To wind up, Hardy's heroines suffer because on the one hand they do not conform to the Victorian ideal of womanhood while on the other hand they are willing to pay the price of becoming conscious of their individuality. Some die literally while others suffer metaphorical death or psychic death at the hands of the society. They are human with ordinary human passions whose vital selves are threatened by patriarchal society. The actual combat is between 'I' as social construct and 'me' the instinctual dialect, and somewhere between these two lies the essence of their being.

Notes

¹ R.G.Cox. *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage*.P.350 (listed)

² Simon Curtis uses the term in the essay entitled "Hardy, George Moore and the 'Doll' of English Fiction" in *Celebrating Thomas Hardy: Insights and Appreciations*. Ed. Charles P.C.Pettit. P.103

³ Thomas Hardy. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.P.221(listed)

⁴ From Jesse F. Battan's article "You cannot Fix the Scarlett Letter on my Breast!: Women Reading, Writing and Reshaping the Sexual Culture of Victorian America." The article provides an enlightening account of the Free Love Movement in New England and the role played by Free Love Press in advocating pre-marital and extra marital sex by publishing the private, sexual experiences of frustrated unwed mothers; desperation of women entrapped in unhappy marriages and of single women seeking expression rather than repression of their desires in the newspapers, journals and weekly magazines. The quote mentioned above is actually the reader's outburst in her letter to the editors of Free Love Literature meant to be published. P.601+ (listed)

Chapter VI

Instinctual Versus Ethical Selves in Hardy's

Female Protagonists

Unlike most of the Victorian writers who tended to criticize the contemporary social structure and values, Hardy attended to more inherent and universal issues. As such, he depicted females not as they lived in the Victorian conservative society, but as they live and act on the broader canvas of life in general. As discussed in the previous chapter, Hardy's queer nature led him into formulating his own image of ideal woman, pasting it onto women of his acquaintance to have that sense of fulfillment.

Though there are clearly perceptible scientific influences on Hardy's philosophy of life, his ethical standards don't show any clue of such influences. Due to co-existence of Hardy's temperamental primitive and modern tendencies, social versus natural dichotomy marks his novels, the underlying motive of which is to reach reconciliation between the two, failing of which brings frustration, disappointment and death. In Hardy's novels those characters who do not come to terms with life choose death and destruction as their only hope of salvation. Those characters who renounce instinctual life—in other words natural existence in favour of ethical one—are portrayed as mediocre; they fail to rise above the common and are indistinguishable from each other in their pursuits. They lack self-determination, moral courage and

resilience so vital to Hardy's rare beings to enable them to assert themselves in the face of conventions.

As already stated, Hardy's works reflect the influence of contemporary intellectual and scientific developments, particularly Darwin's *The Evolution of Species*. Due to profound influence of Darwin, Hardy sees biological instincts far more powerful than consciousness and rationality. Among Darwinian characteristics is the combat between instinctual and ethical tendencies which becomes explicit in the portrayal of female characters. Hardy's females who signify instincts dwell in natural settings where they are free to grow like wild plants rather than growing in fettered pots. Egdon Heath, Little Hintock, Talbothay farms provide them congenial environment for their growth and nourishment. They are instincts incarnated; they imbibe the spirit of nature and their mood-swings reflect but natural phenomena – at times wild and reckless, at others falling to placid phase like one in deep slumber. Their violent moods and turbulence suggest nature's terrific aspects; their calmness and indifference signify nature's placid phases like sweet murmur of the wind blowing through trees in the woods. They are sexually voluptuous, mentally intricate, morally deficient and in search of life of sensations.

Hardy challenges Victorian orthodoxy and moral establishment by excessive allusions to sexuality. He views women not only as victims of repression but also embodiment of voluptuous sexuality. Hardy's serial versions were simply rejected by editors because they were deemed unfit to be published in family magazines. Hardy made revisions to serial versions to make them palatable to

Victorian readers; yet he could not refrain from showing his allegiance to the supremacy of instincts. He was able to do it effectively because he ‘had a remarkable ability to explore imaginatively subconscious levels of human feeling’(Gibson 193).

Hardy explores the ethical and ‘psycho-sexual’(Morgan 50) drives at work in the form of complex characterization. Such opposing psychic forces not only exist but rather form the cores of Hardy’s characters; hence, his novels become allegorical representation of the conflict between instinctual and social drives. The co-existence of opposite psychic drives puts Hardy’s men and women in a moral dilemma. With the emergence of psychoanalysis in the early twentieth century, the mechanism of these forces started making sense to readers with the exposition of these drives by Freud. Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, explores human psyche and discovers three forces at work. Pleasure principal is associated with all those things which we try to take delight in and pursue for the sake of self- delight; while contrary to this principle is death instinct which is at work and is discernible in human behaviour. The principle that establishes equilibrium between these two and makes us go, is reality principle. Judith Mitchell agrees with Mulvey in interpreting Hardy’s heroines’ sexuality in her essay ‘Hardy’s Female Reader’ in order to interpret these forces.

The conflicting desires ...correspond closely with Freud’s...oscillation between ‘passive femininity and regressive ‘masculinity’....Now the female presence as centre allows the story to be actually, overtly about sexuality. It is as though the narrational lens had zoomed in...to focus on the figure of the princess, waiting in the wings..., to ask ‘what does she want? These “two conflicting desires”, according to

Mulvey, are represented by the heroine's choice between the law-abiding "hero"(who represents her passive, feminine, socially acceptable self) and the exciting "villain"(who represents her active, masculine, regressive self). Ultimately, neither of these choices is adequate, because "although the male characters personify [her] dilemma, it is their terms that make and finally break her, and the heroine is "unable to settle or find a 'femininity in which she and the male world can meet (J.Mitchell 185).

On the one hand, social constraints impose do's and don't's in which human beings find themselves entangled; on the other hand there are instincts that make their presence felt if repressed altogether. Hardy's world is thickly populated with beings both social as well as instinctual. Some of them represent propriety of social conventions with instinctual part repressed while others are reflective of those drives which, if left pent up, are destructive in their own right. Havelock Ellis points out:

With Mr. Hardy the individual self with its desires is neither per se, a devil to be resisted, nor a soul to receive its due heritage in the fellowship of souls. It is an untamed instinctive creature, eager and yet shy, which is compelled to satisfy its own moderate desires for happiness before it can reflect its joyousness on others. It is instinct only that saves so egoistic and primitive a moral conception—if it can be so termed—from becoming utterly evil...Mr. Hardy is not concerned, as George Eliot is, with the bearing of moral problems on human action, and his heroines do not talk the language of morals, but a very exquisite language of love (107-108).

According to Havelock's review, 'Mr. Hardy's heroines are characterized by a yielding to circumstance that is limited by the play of instinct' (106). Hardy's heroines are emotional and listen to the dictates of their hearts; they blindly obey their instincts without paying heed to their reason, due to which they become victim of public censure.

Hardy shows a split in the delineation of his female protagonists. This split occurs either within human psyche between one's social and instinctual inclinations, or it is externalized in the representation of characters. They either adopt a socially approved course and become an epitome of social propriety, or listen to instinctual drives and serve as models for instincts-ridden women. This conflict between instinctual and social selves is not just an auxiliary or secondary connotation but rather one of the core issues in Hardy's art and the very foundation of our thesis.

Tess of the D'Urbervilles, with whom Hardy himself falls in love over and over again, is one of those females in whose mental constitution the two opposite forces are at work. The tragedy of her being lies in the co-existence of social and instinctual drives simultaneously. The sensuality of her nature is over-emphasized in the depiction of her portrayal, and she is shown as a being prone to self-delight, though she understands the notion expressed by Friar Laurence 'These violent delights have violent ends'(ToD 252). She is depicted as a blend of moral and immoral impulses. Her passion is to live a life of sensations like Hardy's other strong women. A thorough analysis of Tess's character reveals contradictions inherent in her existence— claiming her right to be considered as an individual in a society which is bent upon reducing woman's status to a mere commodity. She does not want to be a passing thought to this world, rather wishes to live life to the fullest.

She might have seen that what had bowed her head so profoundly-the thought of the world's concern at her situation-was founded on an illusion. She was not an existence, an experience, a passion, a structure of sensations, to anybody but herself. To all humankind besides Tess was only a passing

thought. Even to friends she was no more than a frequently passing thought. If she made herself miserable the livelong night and day it was only this much to them-‘Ah, she makes herself unhappy.’ If she tried to be cheerful, to dismiss all care, to take pleasure in the daylight, the flowers, the baby, she could only be this idea to them-‘Ah, she bears it very well.’(ToD 107-08)

Tess loses her heart more than once as the heat of passion sweeps her off her feet till her instinctive actions bring devastating consequences. She is sent to Alec by her parents to claim kinship where she loses her virginity and comes back as a fallen woman, though she does not consider her offence to be unpardonable and cherishes a hope to be able to start anew after the birth of baby. ‘Was once lost always lost really true of chastity? She would ask herself. She might prove it false if she could veil by-gones’ (ToD 117). She doesn’t seem to regret over her fall from a pedestal of an ideal woman. Hardy is determined not only to restore her but to prove her to be femme fatale. To Hardy’s discreet mind, Tess ‘has not earned but, rather, learned guilt and sorrow’(Morgan 103). It is a matter of relative morality and individual’s temperament whether the reader considers her lapses as outcome of circumstances and natural drives or condemns her as an adulteress and murderess.

Tess seems to be ambivalent on the question of morality and her responses are usually instinctive: Alec reproaches her for trifling with his feelings and asks her whether he should treat her as a lover or not. She is uncertain as expected ‘I don’t know— I wish— how can I say yes or no when—’ (ToD 83). This word ‘when’ leaves room for Alec to make advances as woman’s silence or ambivalence can be taken either way— affirmative or negative. Tess could

have been certain that she does not want to be Alec's beloved as no woman is obliged to please man. Alec is encouraged to wrap his arm round her waist in their ride in The Chase only when he sees the weakness on her part. Can a sleep be so sound that physical proximity of a man could not shake it? Or is it that 'it was to be'(ToD 87) because in the woods where Alec seduces her, her instinctual desire gets the better of her conscious self. She herself confesses to her weakness when she is driven homeward by Alec: "'Tis quite true. If I had gone for love o' you, if I had ever sincerely loved you, if I loved you still, I should not so loathe and hate myself for my weakness as I do now!...My eyes were dazed by you for a little, and that was all'(ToD 91). When Alec imprints a kiss on Tess's lips after her seduction, she seems to be unaware of it once again.

Tess is made to realize her mistake by an artisan whom she meets after parting with Alec. He paints words on the wall 'THOU, SHALT, NOT, COMMIT-' for 'dangerous young females' like Tess so that they should be on guard against their instincts and the evil. She regards these inscriptions contemptuously saying 'Pooh-I don't believe God said such things!' She is 'temporarily blinded' by Alec's passion for her and 'surrenders awhile' for which she will pay for the rest of her life. She preserves the consequence of her offence without inhibition. Her instincts force her to unbutton her frock in front of field workers to feed her child who turn their faces away thinking it to be improper after which she decides 'to taste anew sweet independence at any price' (ToD 107). 'Freedom and happiness, union and ecstasy: these are the goals toward which Tess's experiences and her own natural impulse for joy

have led her' (Hyman 113). Hyman is not the only one who alludes to her 'impulse for joy' because many other critics also insinuate to 'Tess's youth surging up and bringing with it "the invincible instinct towards self-delight' (Duffin 255). Keeping in view her sexuality, critics differ on whether Tess is seduced or raped by Alec. Her sexuality is uttered in her actions more than her language: her breast feeding to a new born, illegitimate child, whom she would baptize herself later, in front of other peasant workers is a testimony to the unconscious delight taken in her physical voluptuousness and overbrimming sexuality. 'Tess's lush sexuality thoroughly upset contemporary readers for whom the synonymy of voluptuousness and purity was nothing short of a Hardyian hoax'(Morgan 124). Hardy emphasizes Tess's sensuality by frequent references to red colour—the colour of blood and life, the sign of danger and rebellion, the lush colour signifying lush sensuality. From Tess's wearing red ribbon in the May dance to her final doom at Stonehenge, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* abounds with allusions to 'red' colour. For instance, "Alec forces roses and strawberries on her, pushing a strawberry into her mouth, pressing the roses into her bosom", 'blood-red ray in the spectrum of her young life' 'the red coal of a cigar', 'a tin pot of red paint', 'red hot pokers', 'the red interior of her mouth', 'a piece of blood-stained paper', 'every wave of her blood', 'tall blooming weeds' giving off 'offensive smells' and 'some of the weeds are a bright red', 'crimson drops', then 'Tess virtually trapped and tortured on a piece of red machinery', and a 'red house contains her future rapist, so it is another red which contains her final executioner, for the prison where she is hanged is 'a large red-brick building'" (Tanner 182-194).

Hardy puts his heart and soul into portraying Tess in such a manner that the reader is thoroughly persuaded that ‘The purest woman contains tides of blood (Tess is always blushing), and if the rising of blood is sexual passion and the spilling of blood is death, then we can see that the purest woman is sexual and mortal’(Tanner 191). The surging of blood in her blue visible veins—a sign of animation and turbulence of life—signifies her overwhelming sexuality.

Hardy supports Tess’s stance and acknowledges her right to assert herself. After being seduced by Alec, she recommences her life by going to Talbothays and falls passionately in love with Angel Clare. Her desire for him grows intense as she knows ‘that the others had also lost their hearts to him. There is contagion in this sentiment, especially among women. And yet that same hungry heart of hers compassionated her friends’(ToD 173). She is pronounced as ‘Ms Flirt’ (ToD 241) by Angel Clare who woos her persistently. She reciprocates his love, but is reluctant to respond positively on moral grounds. Alec calls her ‘Ms Independence’ (ToD 75) when she refuses to avail his offer of riding with him homeward. Hardy refers to her ‘too tempting mouth’ to signify the sexuality she embodies in her person and the desire she excites in men; she entices them with her large eyes which reflect all the colours. Kisses can be stolen from her without her explicit consent; her veins even tempt lovers to kiss them let alone her flower-like mouth, which is obviously a symbol of sensuality. ‘To a young man with the least fire in him that little upward lift in the middle of her red top lip was distracting, infatuating, maddening’ (ToD 178). She has been invested with such sensuality that even her damp, cold skin has the feel of new, fresh mushrooms

in the fields. Here the upward lift in the middle of her upper lip drives Angel crazy while elsewhere in the text ‘madder stains on her skin’ (ToD 145) push him to his testing limits. Angel alludes to the irresistibility of her arms when it starts raining ‘your arms are like wet marble, Tess. Wipe them in the cloth. Now, if you stay quiet, you will not get another drop’ (ToD 219). This reference to the dampness, chill and softness of her body is hinted at more than once in the text which lovers find irresistible. Alec and Angel both feel the same sensation when they kiss her. The touch of man’s lips derives instant, sensual response from her blood by propelling it to rush to her fingertips. Tess, assured of her irresistible charms by both lovers, wavers between her instinctual and moral choices before she succumbs to the dictates of her heart ‘Is coyness longer necessary? Truth is truth between man and woman, as between man and man,...’ (ToD 207). She knows deep in her heart that truths cannot be concealed in such matters.

Angel’s observation that Tess seems ‘to be a coquette’—‘a coquette of the first urban water!’ (ToD 208)—is not without justification. Feeling the pangs of love, she gives in to the desire of her heart ‘to snatch ripe pleasure before the iron teeth of pain could have time to shut upon her..’ (ToD 209). She cannot bear to let any other girl but herself have him; her jealousy shows the intensity of her passion for Angel. She surrenders after thoroughly analyzing the consequences of her acquiescence in marrying Angel: ‘I shall give way—I shall say yes—I shall let myself marry him—I cannot help it!...Yet it is a wrong to him, and may kill him when he knows! O my heart-O-O-O!’ (ToD 210). Her articulations betray her longing to be loved passionately. Her

confession of her former seduction by Alec drifts them apart; she is abandoned by her husband after which she goes back to Alec and starts living with him as his mistress.

Tragically, neither Angel nor Alec acknowledges and appreciates the true self of Tess. According to D. H. Lawrence, Alec knows only to gratify his own physical desire while Angel does not accept Tess's right to be 'the Woman in the Body'. For Alec, she is all experience in the senses— 'the embodiment of his desire', while for Angel she is just a spiritual principle (45-46). He negates her body altogether and in this way both Alec and Angel fall deficient in their capacity to suffice for her desire(46-47). Tess keeps oscillating in her allegiance to these two men and her desire to be loved passionately eventually kills her; she could not join herself to either of them eternally. Gregor credits Alec for realizing and bringing to consciousness Tess's sexuality: 'If it were merely a rape, then there would be no sense in Tess's profound feeling throughout the novel that her whole being has been invaded by Alec, so that in one sense, she feels she belongs to him...If it were simply a seduction, then there would be no sense in Tess's equally profound feeling that her past with Alec is a nullity' (182). When Alec comes to know her true circumstances and maneuvers her to take advantage of his offer, she does feel that he is her husband in a true, physical sense and starts living with him but after Angel's return from Brazil, she kills him and reverts back to her old love.

Hardy retains, then, for Tess with her emotional generosity, sexual vitality and moral strength, the capacity to rise above her fall and ultimately, to redeem the man who, bearing the values and sexual prejudices and double-standards of the society, fails to rise above them in the hour of need. Nor does Tess's last

hour find her bereft of will, self-determination and courage. In knifing the heart of the man who so remorselessly hunts her down, she turns her own life around yet again; but this time with readiness, she says, to face her executioner (Morgan 109).

If it were only for her material needs then she would not have considered Alec her husband in her consciousness. Her social consciousness makes her commit the murder and be hanged as a punishment. Once she is deserted by a man who is socially her husband, she succumbs to Alec's entreaties and chooses to be with him as his mistress, something unimaginable in Victorian culture. The last five days of her life spent with Angel testify to her sensual, insatiable nature which becomes the cause of her destruction and death; her 'appetite for joy had sustained, propelled, and finally destroyed her' (Hyman 120). Patricia Ingham interprets Alec's murder as contrived: "She[Tess] returns to the path of 'self delight' by this deliberate act, and without guilt spends a few idyllic days with Angel; and briefly it is she who controls him." She finds an easy way out after Angel's refusal to consummate his marriage with her "that it was impossible for them to live together 'while that man lives...If he were dead it might be different...'”¹

Tess of the d'Urbervilles, as one contemporary reviewer remarked, is 'peculiarly the Woman's Tragedy'. If Tess can be said to have a tragic 'flaw', it is her sexuality, which is, in this novel, her 'nature' as a woman. Her sexuality is above all provocative: she is a temptress to the convert Alec, an Eve to Angel Clare. Such are her sexual attractions that she is obliged to travesty herself into '“a mommet of a maid”', in order to protect herself from 'aggressive admiration.'(qtd in Boumelha 123-124)

The instinctual versus ethical dichotomy continues in the portrayal of Sue and Arabella in *Jude the Obscure*. Hardy became a victim of severe criticism after the publication of *Jude the Obscure*, which forced him to abandon novel

writing for good. The reason being obvious: Hardy forgot all sense of decorum in treating the subject matter of this novel, which to Victorian public was intolerable. He advocated sex and celebrated illicit relationship as if it were something not to be ashamed of.

Sue has been described by Jude as a sexless creature who is more inclined towards intellectual pursuits. D. H. Lawrence considers Sue 'as one of the supremest products of our civilization' and 'a product that well frighten us'(Lawrence 71)². Sue keeps oscillating between her social and instinctual self throughout the course of the novel. She seems to be ethical apparently, though she is in search of new emotional adventures as she herself admits that 'curiosity to hunt up a new sensation always leads me into these scrapes...' (Jude 193); such ventures lend spice and novelty to her life. Sue's natural self actually rebels against her ethical propriety. When Sue wants to give her natural actions some moral or social significance, she fails and runs from the socially accepted course. She has a dread of convention in which she doesn't believe wholeheartedly. She tells Jude immediately after her marriage with Phillotson that the compulsion of being responsive to him in love-making makes her feel miserable; she abhors the very act the essence of which is to feel in a particular way. She is herself in need of a lover who is responsive to her needs and fulfils her desires. It is only the dread of convention that forces her to adopt a socially accepted path. After getting married she says, 'I felt a curious dread of him; an awe, or terror, of conventions I don't believe in. It comes over me at times like a sort of creeping paralysis, and makes me so sad!' (Jude 348). Sue withholds herself from participating in sexual act in

marital relationship with Phillotson due to the undesirability of her companion; she evades sexual encounters with Jude when she does not feel like responding to his urges. The repressed sexual desire seeks expression, which is manifested in her sadomasochistic tendency of afflicting pain upon herself and others. Due to self-repression, Sue sublimates her psychological turmoil and energy into destroying three men one after the other.

Given Sue's repression of her natural sexuality, psychology would suggest it must reveal itself in some other form. In Sue's case, I would suggest it takes the form of sadomasochism. The early beatings would certainly fit the pattern, but throughout Sue's adult life we see leanings in that direction as well. On the other hand she enjoys torturing the three men in her life by withholding sex, but then equally enjoys her own sense of pain at viewing their pain. She feels 'a terrible remorse ...for [her] cruelty' when the first man dies,...The text claims, 'she would go on inflicting such pains again and again, and grieving for the sufferer again and again (Stave 136-37).

Contrasted with Sue is Arabella, Jude's wife, who is an embodiment of sexual instincts: Jude becomes a victim of Arabella's sexual desire. She is introduced as sexual instinct incarnated along with two other girls who could not catch Jude's attention. She throws that particular organ of pig at Jude's ear that we are shocked to read what it is. It is an open invitation to Jude for self-fulfillment as she is insatiable. Arabella is less human and more inclined towards bestiality; she is being associated with pig- killing. Arabella 'is the bad side of the ignorance and pain of the country' and 'represents the brutality of nature, the uncaring, wanton, random action of natural processes'(Stave 128).

Arabella represents that part of Sue's personality which is disgusting to be owned publicly, though cherished secretly. Arabella is the apparently repressed instinct of Sue, which Sue prefers to conceal. Arabella is ethical covertly, though she has been severely criticized for her bestial desires. Arabella's existence is vital in the scheme of the novel for the manifestation of Sue's repressed sexual desire or unacknowledged part (instinct). Sue suppresses her sexual desire and tries to evade its dictates consciously which affirms Freud's famous dictum that 'The essence of repression', says Freud, 'lies simply in turning something away...keeping it at a distance from the conscious'(Morgan 95).

Arabella is plainly the simple-natured, instinctive woman; in a rough classification, she would go with Marty South; but only in so far as she is contrasted with delicate, fastidious, clever, capricious, Sue Bridehead. For in Arabella, the feminine instinct is sheer destructiveness- at least, so it becomes by reason of Jude's nature....Unquestionably, as a type of the women rudely called 'man-eaters', Arabella is a masterpiece. Whether she is a wanton girl, or Jude's wife, or the publican's wife, or a 'voluptuous widow' weeping with anxiety to get Jude back again, this stupid, not unkindly, clumsily unscrupulous woman seems a creature charged with sinister and incalculable potency. And so she is; she merely transmits, and she has not enough personality to disguise, the power of the world against which Jude has pitted his spirit (Abercrombie 122-23).

Arabella uses men for social climbing; yet she is ethically superior as compared to Sue as in the course of the novel we don't find her explicitly indulging in sex outside the marriage bond. She acknowledges candidly that women usually like men other than their own husbands. Arabella goes with her husband to see Great Wessex Agricultural Show and observes Jude and Sue there. Her childhood friend Anny accuses Arabella of always wanting men other than her own. Arabella's befitting remark--'Well, and what woman

don't I should like to know?...' (Jude 313), significantly reflects her insight into woman's psychology and human nature. Arabella has some principles according to which she lives her life happily. Arabella is not torn by any conflict between instincts and ethics. She has a legitimate child, Father Time, from her first marriage with Jude and she marries another man after leaving Jude. Father Time is the one who kills his half-siblings because they are the product of illegitimate union and are 'sin-begotten' (Jude 383) in Sue's words. Arabella does moral things for immoral reasons while in case of Sue it is the contrary. Arabella leaves Jude and marries another man for social climbing. When Sue makes up her mind to abandon Jude, she tells Jude that it was her desire 'that inborn craving which undermines some women's morals almost more than unbridled passion—the craving to attract and captivate, regardless of the injury it may do the man—was in me;..' and Jude scolds her 'O Sue! ...Do not do immoral things for moral reasons! You have been my social salvation'(Jude 373).

Sue is a rebel and fights against conventions by becoming Jude's mistress. How can a woman be morally or ethically superior if she violates established norms in which a woman has to live with her husband in wedlock? Sue tells Phillotson to let her go to Jude to satisfy herself on physical level. She is called 'a creature of civilization' to which she reacts violently saying '...it is provokingly wrong. I am a sort of negation of it' (Jude 167). From Jude's point of view, 'A negation is profound talking'. On being asked by Jude, after the death of her children, that 'what keeps her preoccupied?', She replies:

O I cant tell clearly! I have thought that we have been selfish, careless even impious, in our courses you and I. Our life has been a vain attempt at self-delight. But self-abnegation is the higher road. We should mortify the flesh- the terrible flesh- the curse of Adam!(Jude 364).

Sue curses herself for always listening to her instincts and choosing the wrong paths, though Jude tries to pacify her that there is nothing wrong with her instincts which he finds natural and pure. Sue is at pains to acknowledge that her punishment is not greater than what she deserves. In her own words:

...But I have always striven to do what has pleased me. I well deserved the scourging I have got ! I wish something would take the evil out of me, and all my monstrous errors, and all my sinful ways!(Jude 364)

Jude finds her ‘fearless, both as a thinker and as a feeler...’(Jude 365) but her own view is that she has something inherently evil in her—if only it could be eradicated. ‘Self-renunciation – that’s everything! I cannot humiliate myself too much. I should like to prick myself all over with pins and bleed out the badness that’s in me!’(Jude 365). Sue is talking of self-renunciation because there is something in her which cannot be renounced or taken out of her as long as she is alive. She derives her strength from her instincts and passions. She seems to be aware of the fact that ‘ the attribute goes deep enough to warrant her being called ‘cold’ and ‘sexless’. In her relationship with Jude, she exhibits not only passion but rather ‘the most primitive form of sex’(Duffin 223).

Sue decides to leave Jude after the death of her children not so much for the sake of Phillotson than to punish herself and Jude. She states it plainly to Jude that she does not want to stay with him any more as his wife. In the first place

she never solemnizes her marriage with Jude on the pretext that love and passion vanishes as soon as it becomes obligatory for two individuals to live together as a consequence of social ceremony; then she terminates this illicit relationship impulsively. Jude implores her not to quit him by reminding her that living with Phillotson would be 'Error, perversity' and 'a fanatic prostitution' on her part. Even Jude thinks that they could not be the pioneers in setting up examples as 'Perhaps the world is not illuminated enough for such experiments as ours'(Jude 380).

Arabella may occasionally have turned whore for practical ends-that, presumably, is how she raised the money to make Jude drunk before remarrying him-but it is Sue whom he accuses, when she returns to Phillotson, of 'a fanatic prostitution' What began as intellectual freedom ends as prostitution to an idea (Alvarez 119).

When Jude could not persuade her to change her mind he surrenders, and is moved to tears 'I never knew such a woman for doing impulsive penances as you Sue! No sooner does one expect you to go straight on, as the one rational proceeding, than you double round the corner!'(Jude 381). Arabella never treats Jude badly; it is Sue whom Jude blames in the end for his wretched condition when Arabella sees him in the tavern. Arabella might appear immoral in her sexual desire but it is she with whom Jude exchanges the last words spoken by him on Sue's callousness and selfishness. 'I didn't expect it of Sue! I stuck to her, and she ought to have stuck to me. I'd have sold my soul for her sake, but she wouldn't risk hers a jot for me. To save her own soul she lets mine go damn!...' (Jude 394).

Sue's 'I' reflects her social self as it is formulated by social, moral and cultural elements, while Arabella represents instinctual self incarnated. When Arabella meets Jude in distress and asks for temporary lodgings as she has been kicked out of her house by her father; she makes a significant remark which reflects her honesty and straightforward nature ' 'Tis hard for a woman to keep virtuous where there's so many young men!' (Jude 390). In Arabella's case, there is no 'I' to adhere to; no social obligations towards children or husband tear her apart. Edmund Gosse remarks that Hardy presents Arabella as gross, disagreeable, coarse and vulgar while Sue is presented as the 'unwelcome product of exhaustion' always uncertain of her motives; she is not in harmony with herself and oblivious 'of the perversion of her instincts' (268-269). Sue is ignorant of the fact that she cannot find peace in fulfillment: to try to live by ethics would be death for her. To live as a mistress with Jude in itself is a proof of her being too unconventional in her approach. An individual like Arabella who does not think twice before her actions, with average aspirations and desires, will never suffer the same fits of regret and remorse through which Sue recurrently passes.

Tess, Sue, and Eustacia, in a split between flesh and spirit choose self-destruction as their only way out. Further, Hardy's women (unlike his men) do not generally seek out God in their men; they are not split by religious crises. They seek self-fulfillment through love and life, not religion. Eustacia is a prime example of such a quest, and *The Return of the Native* becomes one of Hardy's most pagan novels (Jekel 91).

Sue keeps wavering in her religious beliefs between paganism and Christianity: Paganism is 'the celebration of the natural and the sexual' (Stave

141) while Christianity is the celebration of self-abnegation. Sue is caught between these two and therein lies the tragedy of her soul.

None of Hardy's most charming women, not even Marty South or Bathsheba Everdene, can compare with Sue, for the strange and elusive delicacy of her charm. But she cannot escape her sex. The Christian ideal of purity, to be gained by the denial of life, disgusts her; she is for the pagan ideal, the simple unquestioning acceptance of life, neither banning sex nor exaggerating it (Abercrombie 124).

Rosemarie Morgan reads in Sue's purchasing naked pagan statues her repressed sexual desire seeking expression. In her opinion, far from being sexless 'this is no ethereal, sainted Sue but a very physical Sue with feet and hands and a restless, active body.' Sue realizes the awkwardness of carrying those naked pagan statues home, hence she "wraps them up in 'huge, burdock leaves, parsley and other rank growths' gathered from the hedge"(142), to escape public scrutiny. After reaching home, she feels and examines them for quite some time and 'unrobes them—placing them candlelit upon her chest of drawers— and after a restless attempt to read Gibbon, alternately flinging herself on the bed and jumping up again, she unrobes herself and spends the remainder of the night 'tossing and staring' at her naked, pagan figurines' (Morgan 142).

Arabella's does not seem to have any ecclesiastical conviction: she weighs everything in material gain. She takes advantage of what she has been endowed with—her flesh. She does not have a sense of sacredness and does not fall back upon justification of her actions in the light of Holy Scriptures. She prefers to live in the present moment irrespective of her past and without having much concern for future. She is not a hypocrite to lay claim on any

organized religion. Arabella's religious faith can be summed up in Shirley A. Stave's words.

Her claiming of her sexuality prefigures a twentieth-century attitude much more than it harks back to an idealized, mythical, holistic sense of the sacredness of the sexual act. If Arabella is an archetype of anything, it is of the kind of modern woman who grabs what pleasure she can while remaining emotionally uncommitted, constantly struggling to survive in a spiritually devoid world. Arabella is not caught between two worlds, but fully inhabits a barren, modern world (Stave 132).

Arabella is credited by Rosemarie Morgan as a woman who is given the privilege to utter final verdict on Sue, in her analysis of Sue to whom passion is denied by men. In Arabella's opinion, Sue is no exception in terms of sexuality; she has sexual appetite as much as any other woman and "sensing that Sue's heart could be made to 'ache a bit', Arabella registers a whole complexity of feeling in Sue that catches not only at her contradictoriness but at the dormant passions underlying the contradictory signals"(Morgan 148).

The focal role of Arabella has led some critics to contend that it is dubious as to who should have been the heroine of the novel. According to D .H. Lawrence, Arabella should have been the heroine instead of Sue and '[the] artist does her justice against the grain of his tastes'(qtd in Alvarez 117). The following passage proves that Lawrence's opinion is not a segregated one.

In *Jude the Obscure*, with the experience of *The Woodlanders* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* behind him, Hardy wrote a much more moving novel of inner consciousness. Arabella here fulfils the function which has been performed by the choric rustics of the earlier novels, with her unreflecting acceptance of life and her own place in it: 'Pigs must be killed' and poor folks must live'(I, 10). Living entirely for the present, mating, separating, bearing and discarding offspring, re-mating, all without compunction, Arabella accepts the reality of the struggle for survival with matter-of-fact self-interest. In *Jude* and *Sue*, however, Hardy takes one stage further his concept of

the over-evolution of sensitivity. The especial pathos of their situation is that they not only suffer themselves, but suffer with others' sufferings. Jude's agonized sympathy with the pig is heightened by Arabella's indifference equally to the pig's feelings and to Jude's... When Arabella reappears and appeals to Jude at Aldbrickham, Sue recognizes that his compulsive sensitivity is helpless against Arabella's self-interest.'An inconvenient sympathy seemed to be rising in Jude's breast at the appeal' (Robinson 134)³

There exists a pair in each of Hardy's novels in which we see instincts in combat with ethics. The representation of social versus natural order is depicted in the delineation of female characters in *The Return of the Native*. Hardy presents Thomasin as an embodiment of pragmatism in every aspect. She serves as a foil or counterfeit to Eustacia: Eustacia represents instinctual self and her repressed, ethical self is embodied in Thomasin who seeks to set things right. Thomasin considers it as a great source of embarrassment and mortification for the family if she returns home after her elopement without getting married to Wildeve. She is concerned about the respectability of her aunt, Mrs Yeobright and her cousin, Clym. She wants to be judged by her actions and not by public opinion as she has firm faith in the inherent goodness. She tells her aunt that false reports and scandalous talk do not make any difference as long as she believes herself to be virtuous. She has accepted established social norms unquestionably. Thomasin has a pragmatic approach towards marriage. 'I am a practical woman now. I don't believe in hearts at all' (RN 188). Wildeve gives his reasons for being unfaithful to Eustacia by appreciating Thomasin whom he finds fairer than Eustacia. Once the scandalous news of Thomasin's marriage spreads abroad and it becomes publicly known, she no longer lives in illusions of being acceptable to any other respectable man. She argues with Mrs. Yeobright: 'I do not plead for

him [Wildeve], aunt. Human nature is weak, and I am not a blind woman to insist that he is perfect. I did think so, but I don't know now. But I know my course now, and you know that I know it...' (RN 188-89).

Thomasin's rationality enables her to handle difficult situations with perfect ease. Her responses to life, marriage and passion of love are rational; hence she chooses an easy way out of her complications. She learns from her experiences: once deceived by her lover, she immediately stops believing in girlish fantasies. On seeing her arrangement of marriage precisely when Clym is away to escape suspicion, Mrs. Yeobright compliments her for being 'practical little woman' (RN 191). Thomasin wishes to alter her status of a maiden into a married woman before Clym returns from a visit to his friends. She thinks 'only after a second and successful journey to the altar that she could lift up her head and prove the failure of the first attempt a pure accident' (RN 192). Being willing to settle for an ordinary reddleman, Diggory Venn, she is the one who survives. Clym visits her (after the death of his mother who is left outdoors by Eustacia and catches cold) in order to clarify his suspicion about Wildeve being in the house with his wife. Thomasin does not reveal what needs to be concealed keeping in view the rift between Eustacia and Clym, though she has a vague idea of Eustacia's and Wildeve's secret meetings.

Prudence and rationality are characteristics that mark Thomasin's speech and actions. Thomasin's logical reasons are enough to persuade Clym in writing a note to Eustacia. She argues that despite the fact that Clym wishes Eustacia back in his house, he has not tried for reconciliation. She wonders how can he

expect an initiative to be taken by his wife? She seldom gets emotional though she knows that Wildeve and Eustacia had ‘reputed tender relations’(RN 416) before marriage; she watches her husband going to see Eustacia on getting a signal from the latter, yet she remains patient and discreet in her manners. She subdues her emotions and feelings though she is aware of her husband’s inclination towards Eustacia. After her disillusionment with Clym, Eustacia plans to set out for Budmouth with Wildeve’s assistance from whence to proceed to Paris never to return to Egdon Heath.

Thomasin’s objectivity, complacency and self-control enable her to ‘pass unharmed through the same storm that drives Eustacia to death’ (Hyman 78). On the stormy night of her departure, she does not attribute demonic or superstitious dimensions to Egdon Heath.

To her there were not, as to Eustacia, demons in the air, and malice in every bush and bough. The drops which lashed her face were not scorpions, but prosy rain; Egdon in the mass was no monster whatever, but impersonal open ground. Her fears of the place were rational, her dislikes of its worst moods reasonable. At this time it was in her view a windy, wet place, in which a person might experience much discomfort, lose the path without care, and possibly catch cold (RN 437).

Thomasin never seeks perfection in relationships. After being disappointed in her first love with Wildeve, she settles for commonplace rather than destroying herself in pursuing the ideal. ‘Thomasin seems a younger sister of Marty South in her transparency and her intuition. Thomasin represents the resigned spirit, much like Elizabeth-Jane and Marty South. She has experienced the passing of love and has relinquished her dreams’ (Jekel 92-93). Thomasin like Elizabeth Jane possesses a stable nature. She is one of those stable characters—who are ‘not rocking in a perpetual indecision: nor

yet, by the alternative perfection' (Johnson 199). She evokes devotion and regard in Diggory Venn in whose blind pursuit of Eustacia, lies his fidelity to Thomasin. 'But her [Eustacia's] energies and powers are outside of his comprehension, he cannot, ultimately, cope with Eustacia, and his single-minded effort to secure Wildeve for Thomasin and to protect her from harm ultimately fails' (Hyman 78).

Thomasin's moderate temperament enables her to see those things which Eustacia cannot. After the death of her aunt, Mrs. Yeobright, when Clym finds himself in the midst of despair and utter grief, Thomasin's presence is a source of comfort for Clym because 'sweet voice of hers came to a sufferer like fresh air into a Black Hole'(RN 373). She does not exaggerate her grief over the loss of her husband and falls to a placid phase after some time: 'There was humility in her grief, no defiance in her attitude; and when this is the case a shaken spirit is apt to be stilled.'(RN 458) When Clym intends to propose her after the death of her husband she tackles her problems wisely by convincing Clym that Diggory Venn will prove to be a better companion for her, yet there is not a grain of rebelliousness in her tone or manners. She gets accustomed to her new circumstances the way she accepts and welcomes seasonal changes: she shifts to Blooms-End with her cousin Clym as his tenant and saves each pound for her little daughter named after Eustacia.

Egdon Heath and Eustacia share a common spirit and there exists a strong affinity between Eustacia's nature and the Heath's fluctuating moods. Eustacia's nocturnal wanderings, her strange, unusual, revolting habits signify extremity and darkness in her soul—the same darkness that the Heath's face

bears as its distinguishing feature. The inherent darkness apparent in each and every aspect of Egdon Heath, is equally applicable to Eustacia. 'Thus far, she is an imperial recluse, of a grandeur equal to that of Egdon itself' (Johnson 195). Eustacia awaits her overthrow due to something inherently fatal in the same way in which the Heath awaits its final catastrophe.

Eustacia is Thomasin's emotional opposite. Together, the two women represent Hardy's attitude towards love and marriage. Eustacia's passion and vigor, her heedless searching for love, are all quite worthy of admiration in Hardy's world, even if they are sure steps to unhappiness (Jekel 94).

Wildeve seems to be containing within his name the very nature of Eustacia. His name is reflective of her innate sensuality and voluptuousness. 'Wild' and 'eve' contains what Hardy is at pains to reveal about Eustacia knowing the limitation of her lot. Wild in her ways, Eustacia's nature is discernable even in the description of her person. She becomes wild eve when she listens to her instinct; her name "which means 'rich in corn' or 'fruitful' ties her sexuality to nature, to the life-force (Caless 15). His physical description of her stresses her sensual/sexual nature"(Stave 52). Hardy brings out her innate sensuality by erotic imagery and oblique suggestiveness. Unlike Thomasin, Eustacia carries in her constitution fire, death and destruction. After Eustacia's confrontation with Mrs. Yeobright, Thomasin cherishes a hope of their reconciliation to which Clym does not agree keeping in mind their 'inflammable natures' (RN 297).

Eustacia suffers most, and Hardy's problem is to write a novel about a deeply sensual woman without mentioning her sensuality too obviously...From her first appearance Eustacia is associated with fire and heat. She stands by a bonfire which lights the darkness of Egdon Heath. The fire is a signal for her lover, Wildeve, who describes himself as suffering from the 'curse of inflammability' and refers to her 'hot little bosom'.

Again and again she is described in terms that suggest the passion that is on fire within her. If we could have seen the colour of her soul, it would have been 'flame-like'. Indignation spreads through her like 'subterranean heat', and 'scalding tears' trickle from her eyes. (Gibson 199) ⁴

Instinct plays a vital role in bringing about the destruction of Eustacia by leading her astray. Dancing with Wildeve makes her forget her social propriety. When her hopes of prosperous marriage are blurred by Clym's loss of sight in consequence of which he decides to take up furze cutting as his business, she feels distressed and suffocated. In order to dispel her anxiety, Eustacia goes to gypsy-party at East Egdon; her instincts lead her to dance with Wildeve in the hope of reviving her spirits. Pulling down her veil, she acquiesces to Wildeve's request to participate in the ecstatic zenith of dancing delight. She gets carried away putting aside all sense of social propriety and decorum. In seeking out pleasure, 'she was only doing a natural thing to obtain it.' (RN 313) She is led by her instincts in joining the mirth which might cost, in her view, nothing more than her reputation as Clym's wife who is in an ecstatic trance in the arms of her ex-lover.

Through the length of five-and-twenty couples they threaded their giddy way, and a new vitality entered her form. The pale ray of evening lent a fascination to the experience. There is a certain degree and tone of light which tends to disturb the equilibrium of the senses, and to promote dangerously the tenderer moods; added to movement, it drives the emotions to rankness, the reason becoming sleepy and unperceiving in inverse proportion; and this light fell now upon these two from the disc of the moon. All the dancing girls felt the symptoms, but Eustacia most of all. The grass under her feet became trodden away, and the hard, beaten surface of the sod, when viewed aslant towards the moonlight, shone like polished table....Eustacia floated round and round on Wildeve's arm, her face rapt and statuesque; her soul had passed away from and forgotten her features, which were left empty and quiescent, as

they always are when feeling goes beyond their register (RN 313-14).

The ecstasy of being close to Wildeve in one of her favourite pastimes sweeps her off her feet. Her stressed marital relationship, further intensifies her urge to seek distractions and satisfies her passionate nature. She seldom experiences moral scruples regarding her actions. 'For both Eustacia and Wildeve the dance is not only a sublimation of more specifically sexual desires (the symbolic sexuality of the dances which occur in Hardy's novels scarcely needs to be pointed out); it is also a ritual embracing of oblivion and death'(Deen 124). Eustacia doesn't suffer from moral scruples due to which she is careless in her conduct towards men. She pursues her elusive ideals to grasp the satisfaction for which she longs.

Tess is described in the context of a passive object of male desire ...while Eustacia dangerously approaches the verge of sexual subjectivity. She takes independent action in regard to the men in her life, and unlike Bathsheba, Tess or Sue, she suffers few moral agonies in regard to her irregular sexual conduct; even when she is *in extremis* and trying to decide whether to run away with Wildeve near the end of the book, her concerns are primarily personal rather than ethical: "'I can't go,' she moaned. 'No money; I can't go! And if I could, what comfort to me? ...How I have tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me!...I do not deserve my lot!'"(359). This lack of moral compunction effectively removes her from the category of the remorseful but inherently virtuous heroine who has 'given in' to the desire of one or more of the male characters in the novel (like Tess, for example, or George Eliot's Maggie Tulliver) and places her instead in the equivocal position of a female character who has followed her own desire—and is sorry only that it has not worked out as she had planned.(Mitchell 179)⁵

Contrasted with Grace Melbury in *The Woodlanders* is Marty South whose plain, simple nature doesn't put her into the trouble destined for Grace alone. Grace is apparently a product of refined and cultured world who is set against

Marty only to show her antipathy for her acquired social consciousness, education, civility and tastes. Her marriage with Dr. Fitzpiers further strengthens her conviction in the shallowness of social values which lead her astray in the choice of companion. Her fidelity to Fitzpiers does not elicit the response she desires from her husband which her unfaithfulness to him stirs easily; Fitzpiers' infidelity makes her see the folly of her decision and brings to the surface that part of her which is unknown to herself, that is, her instinctual self.

She had made a discovery—one which to a girl of her nature was most appalling. She had looked into her heart, and found that her early interest in Giles Winterborne had become revitalized into growth by her widening perceptions of what was great and little in life. His homeliness no longer offended her acquired tastes; his comparative want of so-called culture did not now jar on her intellect; his country dress even pleased her eye; his exterior roughness fascinated her...Honesty, goodness, manliness, tenderness, devotion, for her only existed in their purity now in the breasts of unvarnished men; and here was one who had manifested such towards her from his youth up. (WL 227)⁶

The lethal combination of instinctual and social in Grace is the root cause of her psychological turmoil and ambiguities. Her instinct asserts itself when she is utterly disillusioned with her marriage and turns to Winterborne to revitalize her passion. She is driven to him by recognizing her natural affinity with a man whose warmth and regard for her is camouflaged beneath his uncouth manners.

Grace's initial preference for a socially convenient match brings disillusionment and misery for her. Her transitory admiration for social propriety sinks with the first blow of Fitzpier's infidelity. She chooses a well-

versed man of science and aesthetics: 'a young surgeon springing out of relics so ancient was a kind of novelty she had never before experienced'(WL 167). This man could give his wife a social identity and could satisfy her intellectual queries, but he is incapable of making an appeal to the depths of her being—her existence. Giles Winterborne, on the other hand, fascinates that part of her which she initially refuses to acknowledge. She experiences mood-swings which she herself cannot logically describe. She is, initially, enamoured with Dr. Fitzpiers and goes into that state of mind which can be best described as infatuation till she reaches a better understanding of what her heart desires. His presence stirs her feelings which would normally subside with his removal from her sight: 'he impressed Grace as a man who hardly appertained to her existence at all.'; she sees him as something beyond herself 'one outside her mental orbit' (WL 172). She does not want to marry Mr. Fitzpiers keeping in view her own social standing. She tells her father 'I wish not to marry anybody; but I'll marry Giles Winterborne if you say I must as an alternative' (WL 174).

Disregard for apparent social exactness vanishes as time passes by and instinctual affinity with Winterborne reasserts itself in the course of the events. Advised by her father, Grace encourages Winterborne when she decides to obtain divorce so that no time is wasted after she is released from Fitzpiers. Winterborne and Grace ponder over their future prospects in the Abbey after which Winterborne invites her to dinner. Being the wife of a refined doctor, she feels out of place in the inn; Winterborne gets embarrassed on perceiving her discomfort and immediately realizes his mistake in bringing her down to

that tavern. She could not explain to him ‘that it was her superficial and transitory taste which had been offended, and not her nature or her affection’ (WL 294).

Grace seems to be passionate in her utterances and actions. Presence of Fitzpiers and Winterborne evoke passionate responses in her stagnant world and it proves to be like throwing a pebble in a pool of water. It is Grace’s passion alone which propels her into the arms of Winterborne and in her girlish innocence she asks him whether it is possible for her to be really free of marital obligation or not. The passionate embrace makes her forget her status for a while till she is informed by her father that she belongs to Fitzpiers irrevocably. On receiving a letter from Fitzpiers ‘Grace’s pool like existence was disturbed’(WL 304) and she is distressed to hear that he might come back to claim her again, and desperately wants to escape him somehow. She confesses to her father that she loves Winterborne irrespective of the fact whose wife she is, or whose wife she is not! It is simply beyond her to deny him the second time when she has got the opportunity to fulfill the desire of her heart. ‘I cannot help that; and I have gone further with him than I should have done if I had known exactly how things were. But I do not reproach you’ (WL 302).

Hardy presents his own dilemma in the delineation of Grace’s character who combines her modern and acquired tastes with primitive longings—the combination which smacks of destruction and distress. She is prone to give way to wavering impulses when the delicate equilibrium between rationality and emotions gets disturbed.

In the darkness of the apartment to which she flew nothing could have been seen during the next half-hour; but from a corner a quick breathing was audible from this impressionable creature, who combined modern nerves with primitive feelings, and was doomed by such co-existence to be numbered among the distressed, and to take her scourgings to their exquisite extremity (WL 306).

Lack of moderation leads Grace to make extreme decisions. Instinct gets the better of Grace's social propriety when she escapes to Winterborne to liberate herself from the bondage of Fitzpiers. She realizes that she had made a terrible mistake in choosing what was socially appropriate and degraded herself by complying with her father's wishes. She confesses her intense passion for Winterborne and her revulsion for Fitzpiers: '...You [Winterborne] know what I feel for you—what I have felt for no other living man, what I shall never feel for a man again. But as I have vowed myself to somebody else than you, and cannot be released, I must behave as I do behave, and keep that vow..., but I have promised and I will pay' (WL 316). On her husband's arrival, she immediately quits the house and takes refuge in Winterborne's cottage who is driven to death due to the chill of violent storm outside, though she yearns to let him stay in. It is only too late when she abandons her sense of social propriety and becomes herself 'Come to me, dearest! I don't mind what they say or what they think of us any more' (WL 319). She longs to reunite herself with Winterborne who is almost beyond her grasp now. In case of Fitzpiers, her infidelity wins what her devotion towards him as a dutiful and affectionate wife could not procure.

Paying heed to instinct reveals Grace's irrationality and unconventionality. Mr. Melbury's bitter reproaches for her imprudence, in fleeing the house and

giving herself up to Winterborne, manifest his resentment for her smouldering instinct and inappropriate behaviour. Her absence for four days shows her disregard for family's honour and her own reputation. She is more herself while with Winterborne: 'Her heart rose from its late sadness like a released bough;..., the veneer of artificiality which she had acquired at the fashionable schools, were thrown off, and she became the crude country girl of her latent early instincts'(WL 213).

Social propriety proves to be suffocating for Grace; her repressed instincts symbolically die their natural death when they are not given social sanction. The vitality of her life vanishes once Winterborne is snatched away and it is signified by his death in the cold storm. She tells Fitzpiers after reconciliation that she would go with Marty to Winterborne's grave because of the devotion she feels for him. She makes a bold confession that her 'heart is in the grave with Giles.'(351) and she considers him as her betrothed lover forever after. In Melbury's opinion Grace hates all refinement, artifice and culture which she has acquired in the town; she longs to be like Marty South with no conflict to burden her mind.

Grace is doomed because she takes too long in recognizing her instinctual desire. When she is confronted by Mrs. Felice Charmond during her walk in the woods, she is horrified to see that 'product of civilization'(WL 244). An alternative interpretation can be that Grace is reluctant to acknowledge that aspect of her character because of her social conditioning. Her instinctual 'self' lies camouflaged behind the veil of conventions. Grace is horrified on confronting Mrs. Charmond in the woods as if 'wild animal' is startled at its

own reflection in the mirror: ‘...Was it really Mrs. Charmond speaking to her thus? If it was, she could no longer form any guess as to what life signified?’ (WL 244). The comment made by the narrator about Grace is self-revealing in this context:

‘a woman who, herself, had more of Artemis than of Aphrodite in her constitution’. This is a baffling comment because under her seemingly docile surface, wild passions smoulder. Although they belong to opposite sides of the marital fence, Grace is really more kin to Felice than is commonly realized. This is brilliantly suggested by the encounter in the woods where Grace, on accidentally meeting Mrs. Charmond, ‘stood like a wild animal on first confronting a mirror.’ Mirrors are self-reflecting, and this interview represents ‘like meeting like’—Mr. Melbury’s shrewd comment on an earlier Grace—Felice meeting (Dutta 83).

Mrs. Felice Charmond is a coquette who turns men into her playthings; she toys with their emotions in the words of Winterborne to whom Mr. Melbury turns for help regarding his daughter’s well being after he comes to know about Mrs. Charmond’s illicit relationship with his son-in-law. ‘She has been a bit of a charmer in her time, I believe,’ replied Winterborne in response to his enquiry... ‘A body who has smiled where she has not loved, and loved where she has not married. Before Mr. Charmond made her his wife she was a play-actress a short while’ (WL 235). Mrs. Charmond is a pure passion—‘an animated impulse only’ (WL 241)—subject to extreme mood swings. She is in the habit of keeping numerous lovers and Grace assumes that her husband is also ‘the plaything of a finished coquette’ (WL 247) till Grace meets Mrs. Charmond in the woods and discovers that she is desperately in love with Fitzpiers and cannot give him up. In psychology, woods are always associated with unconscious drives: we find Mrs. Charmond and Grace finding their way through woods after being lost. When struck by tornado, Mrs. Charmond

embraces Grace for warmth and comfort. She is attracted to Grace and holds her tightly till she gets the better of her fear.

Falsity, deception and social prestige find their appropriate expression in Mrs. Charmond's actions. She sends her agent to ask for a lock of hair from Marty South because the shade matches with her own. When Marty is pushed into selling her hair for a gold sovereign, she tells the agent that Mrs. Charmond wishes to have her hair to trap a new lover. She is a woman who possesses deep eyes and a mind of 'unfathomed mysteries, beneath them there beat a heart capable of quick, extempore warmth— a heart which could indeed be passionately and imprudently warm on certain occasions'(WL 44). In her analysis, Shanta Dutta maintains that Mrs. Charmond is 'but a practiced courtesan, a seductress, a vamp, complete to the last detail: a cigarette in hand. Every word, every gesture is rehearsed and every look calculated to entice.' She equates Mrs. Charmond with Eustacia in her 'languid idleness, her frustration at the tedium of rural life and her frantic desire to escape to the excitement of the Continent...this volatile woman will ultimately destroy both herself and those who come into contact with her'(Dutta 76).

People are used to Mrs. Charmond's capricious nature and mysterious ways. Her past could not be 'fathomed by the honest minds of Hintock' (WL 202). She can be best described in the words of the narrator: 'If one word could have expressed Felice Charmond it would have been Inconsequence' and 'a woman of perversities delighting in piquant contrasts'(WL 201-202) Frivolous in her manners, she feigns sickness at Hintock to revitalize the latent, embryonic passion of Dr. Fitzpiers by calling for him and providing him an opportunity to

make further advances. She seeks to dissipate her frustration every now and then somewhere when her passions get the better of her reason. Her bottled up sensuality needs to be dissipated, she confesses to Dr. Fitzpiers. She asks him in exasperation ‘O! why were we given hungry hearts and wild desires if we have to live in a world like this? Why should Death alone lend what Life is compelled to borrow—rest? Answer that, Dr. Fitzpiers’ (WL 204). The answer to this query, Dr. Fitzpiers does not have.

Nature is represented in its pure form in the figure of Marty South. She is not only a country girl of fragile constitution but also a true complement to Winterborne in the essence of her being. They understand the secret language spoken by Nature which no other person could speak or get. She is stable and consistent in her ways as nothing could diminish her love and devotion for Winterborne even after his death. She does not have worldly cares, any social aspiration or inner conflict to tear her soul apart. She can be identified with woods, trees, seasons and everything that lasts.

The casual glimpses which the ordinary population bestowed upon that wondrous world of sap and leaves called the Hintock woods had been with these two, Giles and Marty, a clear gaze. They had been possessed of its finer mysteries as of commonplace knowledge; had been able to read its hieroglyphs as ordinary writing; to them the sights and sounds of night, winter, wind, storm, amid those dense boughs, which had to Grace a touch of the uncanny, and even of the supernatural, were simple occurrences whose origin, continuance, and laws they foreknew. They had planted together, and together they had felled;...The artifices of the seasons were seen by them from the conjurer’s own point of view, and not from that of the spectator (WL 340-41).

It is through Marty’s revelation alone that Fitzpiers comes to know that the woman he is infatuated with, does not have chestnut hair and locks of hair

belong to Marty who dispatches a letter to disclose the secret keeping in view Grace's agony. This revelation leads to a bitter quarrel between Fitzpiers and Mrs. Charmond, hence leading to the separation of the two lovers. Mrs. Charmond's death ensues thereafter at the hands of one of her abandoned lovers in Germany. Marty remains devoted to Winterborne even when Grace, pressurized by her family, rejoins Fitzpiers. Standing by the grave of Winterborne, Marty 'looked almost like a being who had rejected with indifference the attribute of sex for the loftier quality of abstract humanism'(WL379). Among " Hardy's 'female characters, Guerard places Marty alongside Tess as 'Two Pure Women'; Millgate 'sees Marty as ' a kind of moral touchstone of her world while Brown finds her 'the most moving' of Hardy's character, who incarnates the finest part of country attitudes"(qtd in Dutta 70).

Elizabeth-Jane and Lucetta represent the juxtaposing of ethical and instinctual in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Elizabeth-Jane, Michael Henchard's daughter, resembles Thomasin in her objectivity and worldly wisdom. Stable in her inclinations toward Henchard and Farfrae, she eventually wins even Lucetta's heart. Elizabeth can sail through life's storms unharmed due to her controlled impulses and passions while Lucetta brings destruction upon herself in her intense and violent passion. Lucetta, unstable in her affections, keeps wavering between her two lovers and lose both finally. There is finality and fire inherent in her nature; she terribly lacks Elizabeth's moderation, calmness and clarity of vision. Both men, Henchard and Farfrae, though rivals in love come to acknowledge Elizabeth's sharp intellect by the end of the novel.

Hardy's heroines are torn between their objective and subjective selves. Sue wishes to keep two men simultaneously— Jude and Phillotson. Eustacia longs for Wildeve whose very name contains the essence of Eustacia's soul, or, in other words, Eve's wildness. Eustacia is wild in her passion and tries to reconcile social self (Clym) with instinctual self (Wildeve). She wants to satisfy her vital self or instinctual self, but she is compelled to adhere to her social self, the consequences of which are devastating. Similar distinction can be made in the case of Tess who is poised between Alec and Angel representing her instinctual yearnings and social "Other" respectively. Hardy's rare women cannot reconcile both the social and the instinctual selves; and when they sacrifice one for the sake of the other, the subjugated one becomes the cause of internal turmoil, ultimately bringing about the external destruction.

Notes

¹ Patricia Ingham's Intro. to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.p. xxvi. (listed)

² D.H.Lawrence's essay 'Sue Bridehead' . *Hardy: a Collection of Critical Essays*.p.117 (listed)

³ *Thomas Hardy: The Writer and His Background*. Ed. Norman Page. P.134(listed)

⁴ *Thomas Hardy: The Writer and His Background*..p.199(listed)

⁵ Judith Mitchell. *The Stone and the Scorpion: The Female Subject of Desire in the Novels of Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot and Thomas Hardy*.p.179

⁶ Thomas Hardy. *The Woodlanders*.p. 227.(listed)

All subsequent references to the text of this edition are shown by characters WL and page number.

Chapter VII

Quest for Self in Hardy's Female Protagonists

Life holds a challenge for those who are not from among average lot, and whose aspiration to ascend takes them either to pinnacles of renown and glory, or they are crushed and perished in the struggle to assert themselves. The resistance one faces in the way of self-fulfillment is from both within and without, the force of which tears him apart like a tug-of-war. Dissatisfaction stems from psychological combat between what one desires and what one gets. It extends to everything around; hence it becomes pronounced and manifests itself in one's idiosyncratic behaviour. To avoid the total disintegration of personality, one has to wage war against the established institutions—church, religion, marriage and whatever obstructs the growth of self. The equilibrium between inner and outer world is essential to establish harmony with the chaotic world that is bent upon threatening one's very existence.

In Hardy's world the tussle between the inner and the outer self extends itself to the society and Nature as well. All factors antagonistic to the growth of self coordinate to bring about the fall of an exceptional character. Humanity as a whole is depicted as victim of a mysterious scheme that ruthlessly rules the world: '[F]or the most part the tension in Hardy's works is not between rival individualities but between individuality and everything in the post-Darwinian

world that threatens to crush it. The tension is real, for defiance is imaginatively as powerful as science' (Robinson 146).

Patriarchy tries to reduce Tess, Sue, Bathsheba and Eustacia to an abstraction, whose struggle for survival, freedom, and self-fulfillment aligns them with modern women. On the one hand, they clash with the forces of colossal magnitude; on the other hand patriarchy strengthens the vicious forces by crushing their individualities. Every attempt at bringing them into subjection is met with strong revulsion and resentment. They are judged, rather misjudged, classified and defined by patriarchy according to the preconceived notion of ideal woman with angelic attributes. We have to take into account the reasons for this defective subjective type of judgement. Is Tess judged by both Angel and Alec fairly and justifiably? Does she violate social law or natural law? Does Sue give up her pursuit in the way of fulfillment because she acquiesces to social demands by returning to Phillotson? Is it a masochistic tendency in her to inflict pain upon herself for her illicit liaison with Jude? Does Eustacia also become a part of society by being sensitive to public censure and eventually drown herself? Is her destruction an outcome of her stoic resignation? Are these women antagonistic to society or their intrinsic nature? Most of these questions will find their answers, partly at least, when we will focus on the characters in question as per the direction set by the title of this chapter. Without experiences and self-knowledge, these women can never be conscious of what they are up against! In order to answer the questions posed above, a detailed analysis of their intrinsic nature and the role of society in reducing them to abstractions is imperative.

The analysis of Hardy's novels not only shows preoccupation of the female protagonists with self, but also their struggle for autonomy. Their sense of self, sexual consciousness and passion for a life of sensation alienate them from community and jeopardize their vitality and existence. Hardy's female characters hold in contempt all obstructions in the way of their growth and self-realization; they don't give a straw to sexual double standards based on gender demarcation. They rise above the stature of conventional or model women of Victorian society as they are dauntless in the face of adversities. They not only reject conventions, but are also antagonistic to the established institutions of marriage and religion—institutions that are held sacred by a general mass of humanity. Hardy equips and empowers them to fight against the prescriptive roles. They do not stick to anything that denies autonomy and freedom—be it organized religion or marriage: 'Both egocentricity and a certain obsession with questions of identity were probably inevitable if women were to compensate for that abatement of self-concern relentlessly prescribed for them throughout the Victorian era' (qtd in Dyhouse 192). Furthermore, the frequently prescribed ideal of self-sacrifice must be substituted with the ideal of self development (ibid 192) which is precisely what we witness in Hardy's female protagonists—their untiring struggle towards self-realization.

The callous verdict of people kills exceptional characters in Hardy's world. It holds true for women particularly because they are the ones who are misjudged and classified. On the one hand, public opinion leads to the destruction of Hardy's female protagonists; on the other hand there is something intrinsic in their nature which refuses to be reconciled to the

established system. It is the sense of not being considered individuals in their own right. This is the very point on which Hardy basis his sympathy with individual in their struggle against providence and circumstances: 'His private sympathy is always with individual against the community as is the case with the artist. Therefore, he will create more or less blameless individual and, making him seek his own fulfillment, his highest aim, will show him destroyed by the community, or by that in himself which represents the community, or by some close embodiment of the civic idea'(Lawrence 25).

There is an all pervasive sense of alienation in Hardy's world. Isolation or self-alienation is a product of modern age and Hardy presents his women as embodiments of intensifying sense of disintegration and despair. "In Dostoevsky's thesis the 'intensified consciousness' is the resource and salvation as well as the painful burden of the 'normal' human spirit" (qtd in Robinson 141). Tess, Sue, Bathsheba and Eustacia claim individualities for which they would pay. Sue and Eustacia particularly come close to represent the characteristics of modern women who suffer from severe anxiety over not being able to relish fulfillment. Their encounter with culture or social norms leaves them frustrated, as a consequence of which they suffer from self-alienation; hence leading to psychological death and annihilation. Lawrence's dictum holds true in Hardy's novels in which Love is shown in 'conflict with the Law, and only Death the resultant, no reconciliation' (qtd in Casagrande 38).

Hardy presents the dilemma of self by creating characters who have the ability to realize their potential. Those who carry within themselves a sense of

self—autonomous and independent—and are capable of evoking heavenly wrath, let alone social censure, bring about the destruction. 'They are people each with a real, vital, potential self, even the apparently wishy-washy heroines of the earlier books, and this self suddenly bursts the shell of manner and convention and commonplace opinion, and acts independently, absurdly, without mental knowledge or acquiescence' (Lawrence 9). Rosemarie Morgan's study of Hardy's females, their 'psycho-sexual drives'¹ and redefinition of woman accordingly is quite pertinent here. Not only she discovers repressed and latent passions in their psyche but also unravels their self-resolution, moral courage in establishing autonomy after being judged unjustifiably and inappropriately. Their resistance to abide by prescriptive and preconceived social codes gives them ascendancy to be considered as rare and incomparable.

Tess, Sue, Bathsheba and Eustacia are among those literary characters who inspired the subsequent struggle for freedom of women. They claim it their right to have sense of fulfillment and happiness in life. In the evolution of their consciousness, there comes a moment when they recognize the futility of their struggle for something unattainable in the social and cultural matrix in which they are born. 'Tess is strongest, seeming to gain ground in the real struggle for survival, when she asserts her individual existence most defiantly; not mindlessly, like Arabella, but still sensitively, and the more powerfully because her selfhood is deeply felt'(Robinson 142). Tess plays her prescriptive roles in multiple capacities: as a daughter; a caretaker of her younger siblings who should have been looked after by her parents; Angel's wife and Alec's

mistress finally. At such a vulnerable age, Tess assumes these responsibilities and forgets her own existence. Her mother secretly cherishes a faint hope that in claiming kinship she may entice Alec into marrying her. Tess is portrayed as charming as a girl can be, at the prime of her youth. She becomes an easy prey to Alec's lust after which Tess is no more the Tess the reader is introduced with. After her seduction by Alec, she is shown as a transformed person.

Tess's seduction scene occupies a pivotal position in the chain of events that befall her. It is one of those controversial and much debated scenes which have evoked diverse responses from readers and critics. The real tragedy of Tess's life commences from this particular incident in her life: "He [Hardy] indicates that something pivotal occurred, but clouds it in obscurity. We hear that in the Chase, on that night, Tess's 'self' was altered irrevocably, for the narrator laments it as the point between 'previous' and present selves" (Shires 151-52). She has traversed a great distance in a single stride—distance that lies between maidenhood and womanhood. After this alteration of her status, Tess gives birth to Alec's child—a sin-begotten child who does not survive for long, leaving her once again devastated.

The journey from Alec to Angel is a journey from Tess—the innocent girl—to Tess the blemished woman. When Tess makes her way to Talbothay Farms, Angel takes fancy to her. Tess reciprocates his affections when she sees other girls around desiring him. She succumbs to Angel's entreaties to marry him. Though she feels a very strong urge to disclose her past, but Angel does not give her a chance. The transformation marks a turning point in her identity as

a woman. Even Angel becomes the representative of the society's gender biased attitudes. Tess is not allowed to have her subjective identity, but becomes only objective representation of what others think of her. From thence onward, she represents their desires, values and attitudes.

Pursuing 'passion for its own sweet sake' rather than as a 'means to an end' is something in which Hardy's exceptional and rare Tess believes: "This ideological gap between passion 'for its own sweet sake' and passion as an end', which points, on the one hand, to Tess's unconditional 'I only want to love you' and, on the other, to Angel's need for a suitable wife, suggests just how far Tess has come to a sense of her own autonomy and selfhood"(Morgan 105). Another remarkable scene occurs on the night of Tess and Angel's wedding. Tess is too idealistic in assuming that she can honestly reveal her past to Angel, but unfortunately it turns out to be her misconception. When Angel confesses his diversion with a woman in London, Tess finds the courage to reveal her past assuming that she would be judged by the same moral standards by which men are judged. By this confession, she ruins her marital life, though she is hardly aware of the fact that she will choose to be Alec's mistress, once abandoned by Angel who passes a cruel judgment on her.

This attention to the key confession scene is intended to dramatize the central idea of this chapter – that *Tess* is remarkable for its "portrait" in early modern literature of a tragic heroine whose essential being is indeed the sameness or integrity of her self, despite its undergoing a series of shocks, violence, and social and family pressures that would disfigure or even destroy a lesser person. Tess is imposingly and memorably a novel about self, about a great female self. This self is tragic, - not so much in the traditional classic sense of a

great figure who through a major flaw experiences ruin, and, finally, realization or illumination. Rather, Tess's tragic substance consists of a great capacity for experiencing large adversity and suffering yet sustaining an identity that in her case constitutes a nobility of self (Gutierrez 29-30).

From thence onward, the representatives of orthodox patriarchy brand Tess with different names which hamper her movement towards self-realization. Her movement is checked at each and every turn of her life.

One of Tess's greatest psychological dilemmas, from her first encounters with Alec to her last enactment of the cashmere-wrapped, 'embroidered' kept woman, lies in resisting classification. To Alec she is Everywoman and Eve-temptress. To Angel, predictably, she is first stereotypical fallen woman: 'ill', 'unformed' and 'crude' (ToD 272-81). To Hardy, though, she is complex, diverse, unique: fierce and gentle, regenerative and destructive, trusting and suspicious, philosophical, mystical and sexy (Morgan 98).

After confession, Tess no longer seems to be the Tess Angel loved. Tess is an ideal, an abstraction or stereotype who can be anything but Tess herself. Angel sees her—as an agent not victim—in altogether different light. He considers Tess as sinister, threatening and destructive as she has destroyed the ideal image of pure and untainted woman in Angel's mind: 'She is, indeed, what he says she is, another person from the one he had loved. She forces him to face the self from which he had been endeavoring to escape' (Hyman 133). What Angel's subjective feelings conceive of Tess, is too strong to be subdued by objective existence of a woman who wants to be loved for who and what she is.

It cannot be said that Tess's opposition to the power of the world is less brave or less vigorous than Jude's; but it is static; her prime desire is to be allowed to exist in her own pure nature. And as soon as she clearly perceives that the world has finally got the better of her, that her nature has been invaded by some influence of the worldly enmity which, unlike her first

contamination, is not to be dislodged, which, turns her nature into something no longer her own: as soon as she is assured of this, she takes such vengeance on the world as will make her own destruction inevitable. Rather than to be on such terms, she prefers not to be at all (Abercrombie 113-114).

Tess's inner conflict overshadows all the events of her life. She has enormous strength to assert her selfhood. Playing different roles does not obliterate the probability of Tess's own existence, and therein lies her tragedy. She is fragmented into smaller selves and cannot exist for herself. It is always for the others that she exists in either body or soul. For her parents she exists as a daughter and caretaker; for Angel, she is no less than whore, though she should have been considered an ideal wife; for Alec, she is his mistress but she can never be what she thinks of herself to be—an individual and a free spirited Tess. She displays enormous strength in fighting her battles against the community in whose opinion she is a fallen woman and an outcast.

Tess—an epitome of tolerance and a figure of fortitude whose nerves never fail her in the face of adversities—is branded as a fallen woman in the light of the Victorian code of ethics. Before enabling Tess to fly in the face of conventions, Hardy—by adding sub-title of 'Pure Woman' to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*—enrages critics and Victorian public beyond their tolerance. In her letters, Tess accuses Angel for her pathetic state and for his callousness. It is only after Angel's indifference to her miseries that she becomes what he thinks her to be—Alec's mistress. After her realization that she is mistaken in her high esteem of Angel, she retraces her course to Alec who is humane enough to provide for her needs. It is after Angel's return from Brazil that things really get complicated for Tess as she is still bound to him socially. Had

Angel been justified in penalizing Tess, he would never have regretted over his past conduct in the light of his changed views on morality after returning from Brazil. The ultimate means of desiring fulfillment is death and that is what Tess chooses 'since she is made to assume the guilt, it is she who must suffer' (Hyman 135). Hardy further advocates Tess's case by adding that she has violated no law of Nature though she might be said to have violated social law. "Tess had broken 'no law known to the environment in which she fancied herself such an anomaly'" (Duffin 241).

Fulfillment is not possible without death which Tess bravely embraces. Inability to escape from patriarchal signification makes her extinction inevitable. Angel refuses to accept Tess's objective reality by pasting a stereotypical image of woman onto her. He rejects 'the complex and impure Tess' (Hyman 133) in his obsession to have an ideal woman as his wife. Tess is impure in his perspective, though she only strives to exercise her right to be considered independent in her moral choices. She is misjudged, classified and pinned down as fallen and undeserving of Angel's love. Tess does not ask Angel or the society to expect from her more than she can give. If Tess is less than what Angel thinks her to be, Angel is equally deficient in his capacities to live up to her expectations. Her free spirit desires happiness and fulfillment in the absolute sense for which she is punished. Self-preservation or existence is her fundamental right: 'She is punished for the sin of personal existence' (Abercrombie 112). She is aspiring after something unattainable in demanding from the world and from Angel her right to be. She is disillusioned from Angel as much as he is from her. 'Tess's Angel does not exist...He has been

defined more by what he is not than by what he is, by what he rejects rather than by what he accepts'(Hyman 140).

Lack of freedom, happiness, individuality, and identity suffocates Tess, and she embraces death as an easy way out of her wretchedness. The world of social norms and culture proves to be a prison for her free spirit. Recognition comes to Tess when she has already exhausted her reservoirs of strength and patience; hence she parts with life happily—the life that does not hold a promise of 'fulfillment' in any sense of the word. Death promises fulfillment of her aspirations. The only thing that can liberate her from social constraints and appropriation is death because it will enable her to transcend the boundaries set by society. When her final catastrophe awaits her, she is shown sleeping unaware of her surroundings.

Tess does not stand alone in her struggle of establishing a subjective identity and autonomous self. While analyzing Elfride-Knight relationship in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, we come to the same conclusion that Elfride is appreciated by both—Stephen and Knight—for her unique, independent ways, yet Knight and Angel are alike in their rigid code of ethics.

The struggle to acquire independence and fulfillment leads to the division of self in the character of Sue. According to Lawrence, 'we are divided within ourselves' (qtd in Templeton 58) and this division is between physical and spiritual drives. In the delineation of Sue's character, Hardy portrays a modern woman torn by the split between opposing forces. The gap between the two, if bridged, leads to productive life—full of contentment and satisfaction. The

dilemma faced by Hardy's Sue is that she is full of contradictions and keeps her intellectual quest distinctly separate from physical fulfillment. Sue acknowledges to Jude that 'there was not much queer or exceptional in them: that all were so. 'Everybody is getting to feel as we do. We are a little beforehand, that's all' (Jude 305). Sue does not realize that fulfillment is possible only by a subtle amalgamation of physical as well as intellectual aspects while she persistently divorces physical from intellectual glorification due to which she fails to have that sense of autonomous selfhood. She oscillates between two extremes: her natural inclination and a socially acceptable path. Her dauntless spirit refuses to surrender to the male authority which society approves in the guise of husband. What to talk of a woman who is articulate about her weird opinions so far that she can even think of 'some harmless mode of vegetation' that 'might have peopled Paradise' (Dutta 165). Anything having a stamp of social sanction is intolerable to her unconstrained temperament.

From her protestations, heavily imbued with the phrases of officialdom ('licence', 'chamber-officer', 'contract', 'government stamp', 'on the premises'), her sense of resentment and oppression in the face of male authority communicates itself as a revulsion for all things male-dominated or bureaucratic (Morgan 125).

The right to choose rather than to be chosen dominates Sue's speech and actions. What other motive could induce her to defy authority and flee from the training school to be with Jude? In Jude's opinion, she marries Philltson when she does not understand what marriage is! In a letter written to Jude, she entreats him to give her away to Phillotson in marriage as a guardian because she has no other relative. In this way she ridicules the sanctity of the contract.

Jude, will you give me away? I have nobody else who could do it so conveniently as you...I have been looking at the marriage service in the Prayer-book, and it seems to me very humiliating that a giver-away should be required at all. According to the ceremony as there printed, my bridegroom chooses me of his own will and pleasure; but I don't choose him. Somebody gives me to him, like a she-ass or she-goat, or any other domestic animal. Bless your exalted views of women, O Churchman! But I forget: I am no longer privileged to tease you (Jude 190).

Sue detests the idea of being the passive participant of the contract in which both parties should have equal rights: 'Also implicit in Sue's speech is her rebellion against a society which conditions women into accepting the passive role of being the "chosen", instead of granting her the (equal) autonomy of becoming the active chooser' (Dutta 119). Sue 'is the most fitting of Hardy's heroines to be accorded a political voice' (Morgan 128).

Similarly, the idea of loving someone forever with social sanction does not make sense to Sue. It is not in her nature to be satisfied with something that will go on forever because it has a social license. Her conviction is that one may love and be loved in return forever when he is told to do the contrary. Sue has logical reasons for not entering into the contract.

One of her fundamental objections to marriage- that 'it is as culpable to bind yourself to love always as to believe a creed always, and as silly as to vow to like a particular food or drink'- is an echo of Shelley which reverberated through the New Woman novels. Also, her view of marriage as a purely civil understanding, reflecting no divine or even human morality, is a common feature of the anti-marriage heroine (Cunningham 110).

The sense of servitude or bondage is intolerable for Sue be it to social demands, institutions, religion or men. She does not have any problem while interacting with men as long as the essence of the relationship is voluntariness.

Despite Jude's effort at winning her heart, he fails to persuade her into marrying him due to Sue's inability to adjust her inner life with perfect ease with social obligation which makes it incumbent upon her to look up to someone as her legal husband. Sue tells Jude: "You mustn't love me. You are to like me-that's all,' we feel a vibration here which is not that of Sue delicately preserving her commitment to Phillotson, but rather that of her inability to achieve a commitment of any kind. The 'freedom' she has been at pains to assert..." (Gregor 215). Sue's aversion to marriage or 'irrevocable sexual commitment' of any sort is her desperate attempt to 'retain control of her sexuality by a straight forward restriction of her sexual availability' (Boumelha 144). She is not accepted by the community as the bride of Jude when she lives with him and has borne him children as well. She does not understand the simple fact that she cannot be taken as Jude's wife unless she observes social norm of marrying him with proper ceremony which she ridicules. Had it been a society where Sue would not be stigmatized as adulteress, she would continue to live with Jude while gratifying her intellectual quest from Phillotson.

A refusal of sexual dimension of relationships can seem the only rational response to a dilemma ; in revolt against the double bind by which female-male relationships are invariably interpreted as sexual and by which, simultaneously, sexuality is controlled and channeled into a single legalized relationship (Boumelha 143).

Sue escapes appropriation or classification throughout the novel. She is so unpredictable that Jude and Phillotson have contradictory opinions about her. Her resistance to being reduced to a stereotypical image of woman, surfaces in her strong revulsion to be called someone's wife. Her perpetual attempts to

escape a commitment of marriage is “not a defect of nature, but a necessary stand against being reduced to the ‘womanly’”(qtd in Boumelha 143). She is not what Jude and Phillotson think her to be; they find it difficult to classify or define her. The contradictoriness of her nature is reflected by the words chosen by Hardy to describe her: Jude finds her 'faithful' and 'elusive' (229) 'inconsistent' (231), 'the most ethereal', 'least sensual woman' (365), 'a woman-poet, a woman-seer' (370), 'a sort of fay, or sprite—not a woman' (373). To Phillotson, she is 'elusive' yet 'honest' (388) who does not do anything 'against her conscience' (388). When Sue is with Jude at his lodging she recounts an incident which confirms that she is not a ‘creature of civilization’ as Jude assumes her to be; rather she is ‘a negation of it’ in her own self-analysis (Jude 167). She tells Jude of her liaison with a young graduate at Christminster with whom she spent fifteen months after which ‘he said I was breaking his heart by holding out against him so long at such close quarters; he could never have believed it of woman. I might play that game once too often, he said. He came home merely to die. His death caused a terrible remorse in me for my cruelty—though I hope he died of consumption and not of me entirely.’(Jude 168). Jude is her second victim whom she kills with her callousness. Jude yells in frustration: 'You have never loved me as I love you—never—never! Yours is not a passionate heart- your heart does not burn in a flame' (Jude 373).

She can associate with men, live with them, talk with them on any subject under the sun, in an abstract, impersonal way that is no less admirable than rare. It gives her strange power. It permits her to indulge in dangerous experiments in emotion, like the undergraduate companionship and the marriage rehearsal; it enables her, as Mrs. Richard Phillotson, to be so sweet to Jude that he cries in agony, Flirt! Her behaviour is to some extent based on ignorance of human frailty and fire, but

the strength and mastery are unquestionable, and are the fruit of her 'curious unconsciousness of gender.' My strength is as the strength of ten Because my heart is pure (Duffin 223-224).

Freedom and voluntariness lie at the core of Sue's actions. To be responsive and attentive to someone's needs is foreign to her nature. She is a curious blend 'masculine in its complexity—of passion, intellect and emotion' (Duffin 230). The reader recognizes her inability to force herself into any relationship when Phillotson's physical proximity nauseates her beyond her wildest imagination and she feels like jumping out of the window, rather than sleeping with him. With this realization, Sue asks Phillotson to set her free from the bondage. Being a man of dignity and prestige, Phillotson lets her take the course she desires. She rejoins Jude and lives with him as his mistress, but every attempt on Jude's part to bring about their union is met with strong resistance. She does not want Jude's passion to subside by marital relationship and keeps the thrill of having illicit relationship alive by bearing children as well. Had she been frigid as has frequently been assumed by critics, she would not have borne children to Jude. She must have succumbed to sexual temptations at her own sweet will. The obligation of responding at Jude's will is something unacceptable to her and she refuses to legalize her relationship in marriage. She finds herself totally misfit for rearing up children as they are eventually killed by Father Time (Jude and Arabella's son).

The deaths of the children are a decisive point for her, driving her ever deeper into herself, so that although her behaviour is now in striking contrast to her previous conduct—the return to the church, the remarriage to Phillotson—her fundamental disposition is unchanged. 'The aerial part' and 'the body' are still held together only by a fanatical act of will, her 'enslavement to forms' of self-renunciation replacing her earlier enslavement to forms of self-assertion. Enclosed within

herself, she seals herself off almost literally from human communication; 'clenching her teeth she uttered no cry' when Phillotson takes her into his bedroom, and when Jude leaves her for the last time she 'stopped her ears with her hands till all possible sound of him had passed away (Gregor 226).

The death of children marks the pivotal point in Sue's progress towards selfhood. Sue takes it as a divine retribution for the sin committed in her flesh. She brings destruction upon herself and all those around her including her children by being indifferent to their existence. Sue's responses to Father Time are enough to make the little boy understand that his siblings are the byproduct of the delight taken in flesh, rather than the fruit of love or affections. She speaks without much deliberation and hardly thinks about the consequences of her words. The death of the children marks a crucial point in Sue's life after which she is no more what she was. She has discovered that self-renunciation is the ultimate reality 'I well deserved the scourging I have got! I wish something would take the evil out of me, and all my monstrous errors, and all my sinful ways!'(Jude 364)

How has Sue come from full circle from 'self-delight' to 'self-abnegation'? From the outset Sue has rebelled against the established roles for women in education, society, marriage and religion, but particularly against her own sexuality. It is this final rebellion which so conclusively condemns Sue to remorse (Jekel 180).

Despite Sue's intellectual superiority, which is hinted at numerous points in the novel, she chooses adultery as a road to self-fulfillment. As a consequence, she suffers from psychological death. She responds to her instinct but eventually embraces the finality awaiting her since long by stoic resignation. Sue has an extraordinary intellect which shines like a diamond. When Jude praises her: 'You have been fearless, both as a thinker and as a feeler' (Jude

365) Sue responds that she has always done what her heart desires. She has to pay the price of going against the established norms and degrading all the institutions held sacred by the society. A sense of guilt and remorse over her past conduct drives her almost insane and ‘she feels she must do penance and renounce pleasure altogether’ (Hyman 170). Hyman agrees with Gregor in interpreting Sue’s remarriage with Phillotson as a ‘kind of penance, an exercise in self-discipline, a means of mortifying the flesh’ (171). Sue’s return to Phillotson ‘is a loathsome thing, a turn toward death-in-life’ (qtd in Casangrande 59) while for Kucich Sue’s return to Phillotson ‘is mediated by her sense of social obligation’ (231). She becomes an emotional wreck and an objective spectator who watches her own annihilation with silence: ‘Sue moves into silence; in her last two appearances, she stops her ears to avoid hearing Jude, and clenches her teeth to avoid addressing Phillotson’ (Boumelha 140). The only thing Sue has to utter is something unutterable: “‘I can’t explain’ becomes a kind of motto” (Boumelha 140).

Sue cannot be defined as sexless or ethereal: if she is beyond definition, how can she be judged or evaluated by the upholders of patriarchy? The callous verdict on her rarities condemns her to self-affliction and isolation, hence leading to her metaphorical death. Sue is disgusted with her body and seeks release from everything that it needs. She reaches the ultimate reality of her being when she has lost everything.

‘And she humbled her body greatly, and all the places of her joy she filled with her torn hair.’ The ‘aerial part’ now seeks to annihilate ‘the body’, and the freedom it seeks is the last freedom of all-the freedom of self-destruction. But ‘the body’ can longer be thought of as ‘the individual body’, and in

destroying herself, Sue destroys the lives of those around her'
(Gregor 223).

Subjection in any form is beyond tolerance for Sue. She regresses to penalize her own body for purgation by committing it to Phillotson's charge. Living with Phillotson may absolve her from the feeling of guilt: "When Sue reverts at the last to the grossest form of subjection, having physically steeled herself for the task...I've wrestled and struggled, and fasted and prayed, I've nearly brought my body into complete subjection', she takes on her infantilized role with a vengeance"(Morgan 131). The only way out of her misery is revenge and infliction of pain upon herself—physical or psychological. This desire to annihilate the flesh or body is a recurrent theme in Hardy's novels. 'It is the same cry through Hardy, this curse upon the birth in the flesh, and this unconscious adherence to the flesh' (Casagrande 38). Nothing less than affliction can satisfy Sue at this point of her life—when she can have no more than what she has already lost.

But it is the only means available to Sue, in danger of total personality breakdown, of gaining a hold on her identity, of gaining a hold on a self which in its infantile sexlessness and hatred of its femaleness had won the hearts of those standing in judgement upon her (Morgan 131-132).

Sue has been criticized severely for being emotionally sterile; who is 'even cruel, in a refined way, her deliberate, "epicene" frigidity having killed one man before the novel even starts' (Alvarez 118). Jude loves her despite her cold insensitivity. She confesses to Jude that she is driven to him partly by her jealousy and partly by her insatiable desire of being loved.

At first I did not love you, Jude; I own. When I first knew you I
merely wanted you to love me. I did not exactly flirt with you;

but that inborn craving which undermines some women's morals almost more than unbridled passion—the craving to attract and captivate, regardless of the injury it may do the man—was in me;...I couldn't bear to let you go—possibly to Arabella again—and so I got to love you, Jude. But however fondly it ended, it began in the selfish and cruel wish to make your heart ache for me without letting mine ache for you' (Jude 373).

Sue's progression from self-narcissicism to self-disgust signifies her growing sense of disappointment and ultimate despair over not being accepted for what she is and consequent denial of her integration into the community. Her intrinsic nature is the root cause of all her miseries due to which she cannot become a part of society. Any deliberate effort at social integration by conforming to socially approved course is totally frustrating for a woman like Sue whose very demand is to be given her autonomy.

The sexual inequality, the complete reduction of woman to the status of a commodity to be handed over from one owner to another, the absolute proprietorial rights of the husband over his wife—over both her wealth and her body—were a social reality in an age when a woman practically surrendered her legal existence on marriage. Also implicit in Sue's speech is her rebellion against a society which conditions women into accepting the passive role of being the 'chosen', instead of granting her the (equal) autonomy of becoming the active chooser (Dutta 119).

Neurotic or pathological behaviour is a symptom of too much suppression. On the publication of *Jude the Obscure*, there were assaults of different reviewers majority of whom condemned Sue for being strange and neurotic. A reviewer in 'The Morning Post' calls her 'A highly- strung nervous, hysterical woman' (Jekel 178) who has the ability of being poetic or prosaic at the most critical moment of her life which is quite unnatural and abnormal. Another reviewer in 'The Guardian' finds Sue 'revoltingly refined' and even pathological (Jekel

178). Sue's dilemma is that she could not combine Jude and Phillotson into a being she desires for fulfillment. Jude alone can suffice for her physical urges while Phillotson is her intellectual craving. Sue's relationship with Jude and Phillotson makes one complete marriage; she has to be with both to consummate her marriage or consummate her spirit. In Stave's opinion, Sue is such a complex character that it is actually difficult to call her a woman with balanced personality, and 'dealing with Sue as a character is very similar to dealing with a neurotic person outside of fictions and texts—it can quickly drive one to distraction'(133).

The tragedy of Sue lies in the ambiguity of her desires, impulses and passions. Her lover Jude registers her physical response while Phillotson is too insensitive to be aware of anything else but her intellectual craving. In order to win a woman like her, one has to be well equipped in both capacities—physical and intellectual. Her physicality wants her to submit to her natural instincts while her intellectual bent of mind needs to be asserted. Sue's very name 'Sue Bridehead' is indicative of the inherent contradiction in her: Bride stands for sensuality and head is all rationality.

Sue is a lily and Bridehead sounds like maidenhead, she is the untouched part of him, all intellect, nerves, and sensitivity, essentially bodiless. It is this combination of nonphysical purity with exaggeratedly sharp intellect and sensitivity which preserves her for Jude as an object of ideal yearning, hopeless and debilitating. It is yearning for his own lost innocence, before his Christminster ambitions were diverted by Arabella. Even when he finally round on her, after all their years and tragedies together, he can still only call her 'a sort of fey, or sprite-not a woman' (Alvarez 116).

Inherent in the name 'Sue Bridehead' is the complexity of her existence. She detaches herself from one or the other element of her constitution by force. "Sue is the 'victim of a cultural literary convention (Lily and Rose)' that cannot allow her to have both a mind and sexuality"(qtd in Boumelha 146). Arabella is commendable for her insight into Sue's psychic intricacies: "Her insight into the unguarded, passionate, sensual Sue struggling to break from the curbing 'ennobled' mould which imprisons her, presents the reader with a deeper understanding of the strong, vital woman conceived by Hardy and tragically misconceived by Jude"(Morgan 153-154). In fact, Sue is misrepresented and misjudged by both—Jude and Phillotson. They misrecognize her and misrepresent her due to which she breaks down. Both of them paste their subjective desires onto her, ignoring her subjective identity and objective reality of her existence as an individual with her own aspirations. 'Sue comes to see in Phillotson her husband in law, as Tess comes to see in Alec her husband in nature; the logic is only apparently opposite, for in both cases it is underpinned by that sense of the irrevocability of commitment which is inculcated by the ideology of marriage'(Boumelha 150). If critics accuse Sue for falling short of Jude's dreams and Phillotson's expectations, Sue is also disappointed with both of them. Her revulsion for social propriety is veiled in her revulsion for physical union with Phillotson. Her refusal to surrender to Jude's sexual urges after marriage with Phillotson reveals her inherent antagonistic tendency towards institution of marriage as a binding force. 'This equation of a loveless marriage with prostitution must have been startling to a society which idealized the sanctity of home and

hearth, and insisted on keeping the 'good' and the 'bad' women socially together' (Dutta 160).

The resistance to be defined, classified and pinned down as 'woman' and the passive participant of any contract is not restricted to Tess and Sue. Bathsheba's resistance to be absorbed in the identity of patriarchs testifies to her autonomous and independent way of thinking. Once again it is the sin of personal existence and this woman needs to be taught how a model woman ought to behave. She is made to understand what is expected of her in a culture in which a woman's sphere is already defined and her roles prescribed by the society. Management of farms, business dealing and toying with men's emotions when she is no 'schemer of marriage' will only engender resentment among men and will never incur approval by patriarchy. She humiliates Gabriel Oak by dismissing him from service; she drives Boldwood insane by a childish freak played upon him on the pretext of responding to his devotion. Bathsheba justifies her reckless behaviour towards Boldwood: 'I was bound to show some feeling, if I would not be a graceless shrew. Yet each of those pleasures was just for the day—the day just for the pleasure. How would I to know that what is a pastime to all other men was death to you?' (FFMC 228). Bathsheba's marriage with Troy turns out to be disastrous due to her incapacity to see beyond the superficial. Her passing fancy makes her blind to his pretence.

The society marginalizes Bathsheba on the basis of her anatomy or gender which breeds contempt and resentment in her. Bathsheba has the ability to astonish those who push her to the peripheral position on the basis of her

gender by assuming her to be deficient in managerial skills. Despite her talents, Oak expresses his concern regarding her management of farms after he quits: 'How would the farm go on with nobody to mind it but a woman?(FFMC 217). While inspecting corn on the palm of her hand 'she somewhat defiantly turned up her face to argue a point with a tall man, suggested that there was potentiality enough in that lithe slip of humanity for alarming exploits of sex, and daring enough to carry them out' (FFMC 105). In corn market she strictly adheres to her own prices. As to the management of farms, her resolution is commendable when she tells her workers that they should not delude themselves into thinking that being a woman she will not know the unfair ones among them if there are any, implying that she can distinguish between the good and the bad. 'I shall be up before you are awake; I shall be afield before you are up; and I shall have breakfasted before you are afield' (FFMC 97). How can such a woman let go of her autonomy and identity?

Bondage or captivity is met with strong resistance by Bathsheba who holds a grudge against God for making her a weaker sex. Her views on love, marriage and husband come as no surprise to the reader who is familiar with Hardy's conception of exceptional, arrogant, desirable, self-willed and strong women seeking self-realization. Bathsheba's first encounter with Seargent Troy reveals her aversion for the other sex when her dress is tugged. In his effort to disentangle it, Troy makes it clear that 'you are a prisoner, miss; it is no use blinking the matter' (FFMC 183). The word 'prisoner' implies captivity and is more than sufficient to put her on guard against this representative of patriarchy; hence Bathsheba gets alarmed. Troy wonders and is at a loss to

comprehend the reason that may account for such a fair and dutiful girl's 'aversion to her father's sex' (184). Troy's appearance on the scene posits a threat to her existence, individuality, freedom and independence, and she suffers dire consequences. Troy's devious ways wins her over and the realization comes when her property is already squandered by Troy. She is betrayed by Troy and expresses her discomfort over her lot in utter helplessness and despair 'Loving is misery for women always. I shall never forgive God for making me a woman...' (FFMC 222). Like Hardy's headstrong women, she refuses to believe in love. That this woman is at war against society is obvious from her setting off for Bath to track down Troy when, according to country folk, 'the ladies don't drive at these hours, miss, as a jeneral rule of society' (FFMC 240). On being reprimanded by Boldwood for claiming to be in love with him and denying it later, Bathsheba admits: 'you over-rate my capacity for love. I don't possess half the warmth of nature you believe me to have. An unprotected childhood in a cold world has beaten gentleness out of me' (FFMC 229).

The will not to be bound, subjugated or suffocated in the limited space defined by matrimony or wedding ring gives significance to Bathsheba's actions throughout the novel. 'Oak's activity of espial unobtrusively links with denial, with the prohibition placed upon Bathsheba's growth to self-knowledge, which, as prefigured in the proposal scene, ultimately leads to the total enclosure of her space that Oak's wedding ring signifies'(Morgan 53). The idea of being possessed by a man, in any sense, is disgusting to her.

Independent, strong-willed and free-spirited Bathsheba is not an easy woman to conquer and rule over, particularly when life has taught her to assert herself. She is difficult to conquer, and, if conquered, she will never own it unless beaten by circumstances. She finds a certain degree of stooping in committing herself to the charge of a man and 'renouncing the simplicity of a maiden existence to become the humbler half of an indifferent matrimonial whole' (FFMC 306). When Farmer Oak discloses his love for her, she gives vent to her feelings regarding marriage by saying 'Well, what I mean is that I shouldn't mind being a bride at a wedding, if I could be one without having a husband. But since a woman can't show off in that way by herself, I shan't marry—at least yet' (FFMC 40).

Dominance or authoritative attitude shows itself in Bathsheba's arrogant speech and actions. Bathsheba is wooed by Gabriel Oak whose proposal she turns down. Bathsheba tells Liddy (her confidante) that Oak is not good enough for her: 'It wouldn't do, Mr. Oak. I want somebody to tame me; I am too independent and you would never be able to, I know' (FFMC 41). Her refusal has the ring of Eustacian passion. Wildeville doesn't suffice for Eustacia and Oak will not do for Bathsheba, then who will suffice for her desire? Bathsheba is a woman who sees a kind of condescension in surrendering to a lover's kiss or his embrace. Liddy's remarks on Bathsheba's arrogance are enlightening "How sweet to be able to disdain, when most of us are glad to say, 'Thank you!' I seem I hear it. 'No, sir—I'm your better,' or 'Kiss my foot, sir; my face is for mouths of consequence'" (FFMC 89). That she is a woman of strong will is acknowledged by Troy himself. Troy's apprehension is

obvious in his remark: 'But she has a will—not to say a temper, and I shall be a mere slave to her. I could do anything with poor Fanny Robin' (FFMC 260).

The power struggle between Troy and Bathsheba to establish their identities surfaces and becomes pronounced in the choices they make. Transitory passion for Troy blurs Bathsheba's vision and judgment, and she falls an easy prey to snares laid by him. Troy's intention in keeping woman as his slave is obvious from his choice of Fanny Robin whom he can subjugate. To subdue or break Bathsheba's will is a tough task for him and it jeopardizes his masculinity to assert which he overdoes his role. 'Victor Hugo's quotation, perhaps pertinent in this context, is copied in Hardy's 1867 Notebook which reads: It is said that slavery had disappeared from European civilization. This is a mistake...It weighs now only upon woman, and is called prostitution' (quoted in Dutta 203).

The inadequacy of language to express a woman's self and her resentment for patriarchy finds its true expression in Bathsheba's shrewd remarks when she refuses Boldwood. Bathsheba could not be persuaded by Boldwood's repeated entreaties after she becomes a widow. She is a shrewd woman who knows the inadequacy of language to deal with a woman's feelings and emotions. She tells him deviously: 'It is difficult for a woman to define her feelings in language which is chiefly made by men to express theirs' (FFMC 390). Boldwood's later mental derangement is a proof of Bathsheba's discretion in refusing him. It is only after Troy's betrayal that Bathsheba recognizes herself standing in contrast to Fanny Robin. After being disappointed with Troy, Bathsheba does see the folly of marrying him. She feels a sense of loneliness

and despair after her disastrous marriage, particularly after Fanny Robin's death.

Dominance and subjugation is a central concern which gives significance to Bathsheba's thoughts and actions. Realization of her defeat comes to Bathsheba but with its own price. It is Fanny Robin's death which brings a realization of her own inadequacies as a female. Lying dead in her coffin with her baby, Fanny Robin appears victorious to Bathsheba. Bathsheba feels herself to be defeated by her rival who, by dying, transcends the confinement of body and relishes fulfillment. Fanny Robin wins Troy's loyalty and turns out to be the usurper of Bathsheba's status. Bathsheba wants to equate her status with Fanny Robin: 'The one feat alone—that of dying—by which a mean condition could be resolved into a grand one, Fanny had achieved....which had, in Bathsheba's wild imagining, turned her companion's failure to success, her humiliation to triumph, her lucklessness to ascendancy; it had thrown over herself a garish light of mockery, and set upon all things about her an ironical smile' (FFMC 330-31).

Despite being bothered consistently by the pursuit of her three contending suitors, Bathsheba never experiences failing of any sort in her capacities—as a woman farmer, a farm manager and a sheepshearer. It is only in one role—that of a wife—where she is lacking terribly. In other words, her capacity as a woman is doubtful. Men cannot find comfort in her femininity and she gets the evidence of it in her husband's relationship with Fanny Robin whose womanhood is asserted in the birth of a child. Bathsheba desperately wishes to escape from herself but whither? In Troy's callous estimate, Fanny Robin is

his real wife and much more to him than his own wretched wife. The question of her identity becomes pronounced in her words ‘if she’s—that, --what-- am I?’ Linda M. Shires analyzes Fanny Robin’s death scene in detail and interprets Bathsheba’s death wish as her desire to find ‘peace from gender struggle and specifically what she perceives as male domination’ (Shires 49). Bathsheba screams in agony at the discovery of Fanny’s victory. She is misjudged and stereo-typed by the representative of patriarchy who happens to be her owner: “The scene of the corpse, through Troy’s intervention, becomes one of misrecognition of femininity. ‘If she’s—that,--what—am I? cries Bathsheba with despair and indignation’. Not seeing her femaleness in his view of her femaleness, she does not know who she is. Yet she will find out” (Shires 60). Shires is justified in considering the place, where Bathsheba takes refuge from patriarchal appropriation, more like a womb; her escape to that place and falling asleep reinforces her wish to be in a world devoid of gender discrimination.

Having thought of “nothing better to do with her palpitating self for the night, the self-divided Bathsheba wakes up, voiceless but refreshed. With the morning light, the fern brake is misty and blurred, as if gender itself were mixed in “hazy luminousness” The landscape is inscribed with sexual signs both masculine, such as spiky ferns and tall fungi, and feminine, such as the dawn and the pool.’ but this ‘womblike haven where she could commune with herself alone, is invaded not only by the sounds of birds, but also by the voice of ploughman and a team of her horses.’ This masculine intrusion reasserts itself and determines her position in a gendered world (Shires 60-61).

Troy does not judge Bathsheba justifiably and fairly; he becomes the mirror and distorts her identity by creating an illusion of her real self. Instead of taking pride in her abilities, here is a man reminding her of her inadequacies.

Instead of loving her for what and who she is, he is judging her for what she is not. He is not appreciating her for what she is; he is condemning her for what she is not. He can never see Bathsheba the way she sees herself—as an independent woman who has her own ways. A ‘misrecognition of femininity’ (Shires 60) on the part of Troy, is the same misjudgment that kills Tess and Eustacia. Troy represents the society like Angel; he treats Bathsheba cruelly and seeks to negate her identity by asserting his own manliness. Here, for the first time, Bathsheba hears her own voice as ‘quite that of another woman now’ (FFMC 334); and she is made to take a course which, in all her senses, she would never have taken. Her resolve to escape from her conventional husband to become a runaway wife is typical of a proud woman of her caliber. She confronts her real self in this scene: the self which instigates her to take refuge in a space which is a neutral zone—a place free from gender dichotomy. Her desperation is at the peak when she says ‘Liddy if ever you marry—God forbid that you ever should! You will find yourself in a fearful situation’ (FFMC 341).

Troy, Boldwood and Oak define their masculinity by redefining Bathsheba according to their wishes, hence making her see the prescriptive roles of woman. After redefinition, Bathsheba is no longer the Bathsheba of the earlier chapters. Betrayal of Troy robs her of her happiness, peace of mind and pride: a representative of patriarchy questions her womanhood. Had it not been for her uncle’s confidence which he reposed in her abilities as a caretaker of his property, she would have ended up her life rather than live in a perpetual misery.

Patriarchy plays a vital role in the reduction of extra ordinary woman—cocooned in the identity prefigured for her—to an abstraction, an ideal; hence nullifying her individuality in the culturally approved image of woman. She is supposed to have sprung from one prototype²: 'And the prototype, unfortunately is invidiously sexist, a mysterious, unpredictable and alien entity called woman...' (qtd in J. Mitchell 159).

Hardy projects the image of an exceptional woman, preoccupied with the question of self, in the portrayal of Eustacia. Eustacia is described as 'the rare woman, with her affinity for heights' (Morgan 80) who is destroyed by the forces beyond her control: 'Her insistence upon achieving her own personal freedom and happiness first isolate her and then doom her to extinction' (Hyman 62).

Hardy will not have her [Eustacia] sink, like Clym, into a wasting decline. As befits her Olympian status she will be consumed by the elements; her death will call up a fury in the natural world; like her Wessex predecessor, King Lear, she will be stricken with wild and fretful delirium under impetuous blasts: 'nocturnal scenes of disaster (Morgan 80).

In Eustacia, Hardy presents the image of a woman whose wilder emotions are difficult to be fettered within the defined boundaries of the culture. Her passion for life sweeps her off her feet: "She is a woman, after all, with a liking for warriors and a strong yearning for 'life-music, poetry, passion, war and all the beating and pulsing that are going on in the great arteries of the world'" (Morgan 77). She refuses to be judged by people for what she appears to be to the folk of Egdon Heath. Her apprehension that she would not be judged fairly turns out to be true and compounds her wretchedness in marital relationship. She marries Clym, despite Mrs. Yeobright's strong opposition,

for her fleeting fancy which she mistakes to be her love for him, though her wild and fiery soul cannot wed with a man like Clym, the essence of whose being is placidity—to have a calm existence among furze-cutters.

Hardy describes Eustacia's zest for life in her extreme mood swings—from wild excitement to utter desolation: 'Thus it happened that in Eustacia's brain were juxtaposed the strangest assortment of ideas, from old time and from new. There was no middle distance in her perspective...' (RN 79). Eustacia is a lonely figure whose passion sweeps her off her feet to the man who suffices for her desire which, later, turns out to be her false assumption. She seeks recognition of her worth to which Clym is blind. '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' (Gregor 87). It is Wildeve who submits to her fatal attraction by acknowledging her power and control over him. 'Eustacia's sense of her own identity seeks reaffirmation, not through action, but through that confirmation of value which is the desire of another' (Boumelha 55). Wildeve gives response not only to Eustacia's bon fire signals and calls, but also promises to pull her out of her state in which she feels deprived of every joy the glamorous life of Paris has to offer. She manifests traits of the 'literary lineage of the destructive and self-destructive *femme fatale*' (ibid 55) whose sense of self can only be realized and confirmed by Wildeve.

If Sue Bridehead is the subtlest of Hardy's feminine characters, Eustacia Vye has the deepest force. She is one of those figures who are not only themselves, but their own incarnate destiny.

They are in a world which is a tragic poetry of their own creation; for it is a world made by 'submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind,' and these are dangerous desires for self-importance, which find a heady satisfaction in standing upright and unconquerable against a world of enmity. And so the tragic poetry of their own notional world at last overwhelms them; since they are unconsciously bent towards those actions whose result is likely to make their actual world conform to the world of their imaginative pride. Such is Eustacia (Abercrombie 77-78).

Hardy presents the dilemma of an eccentric woman and the chaotic state of her mind by portraying Eustacia as a misfit or deviant in her behaviour. She revolts against a repertoire of cultural images. She is portrayed 'as the sum total of male circumscriptive attitudes' (Morgan 81). Patriarchy defines the indefinable Eustacia in terms contradictory to her own estimation of self. The inner discord and frustration stems from the diversity of culturally approved images pasted upon her. It disrupts her natural harmony with the place around and manifests itself in her strange rising and sleeping habits; her staying at home on Sundays and going to Church when there is no service. Clym, Eustacia's husband, is isolated and withdrawn after losing his eye sight. His physical handicap metaphorically extends itself to his becoming insensitive to Eustacia's longings, passions and desires. As a consequence, she gropes in the darkness to get hold of something which could enable her to stand upright to assert her independence. Nothing could break her amidst crises 'but it is the invisibility (to him) of her pain, frustration and desire that drives her out of her mind' (Morgan 74). Her marriage with Clym is more like putting ice and fire together, signifying the ultimate improbability of their co-existence. "To her grandfather, who inconsistently chides and neglects her, she is alternately childish and romantical, non-sensical or sportive-'one of the bucks'. To Venn

she is the fabled femme fatale; to the heath-folk she is a witch; and to Clym, predictably, given his reversion to type, she is first goddess then whore” (Morgan 81).

The witch is traditionally supposed to have supernatural powers which allow her to alter the material circumstances of her world to fit her own desires, and this indeed corresponds to Eustacia’s image of herself and of fulfillment; she sees herself, for instance, as having somehow materialised Wildeve into existence...Eustacia, furthermore, poses a particular threat to the women of the community, being disruptive by virtue of her unfocused sexuality (Boumelha 53).

Public opinion alone does not kill Eustacia; rather it is actually the frustration of not getting what she desires as ‘there is no place which offers the kind of freedom and happiness that she desires’ (Hyman 85). What an unjustified classification of the woman for whom the epithet ‘rare’ has been used frequently by Rosemarie Morgan in her book *Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy*! Eustacia has been described as ‘the rare splendid woman’(74); ‘the rare woman’(80), ‘the rare creature’(80); ‘the rare bird’(74) whose wings are clipped to ensure her fall. She is split between her desire to be herself and what others want her to be. “For Eustacia, however, the problem takes only the form of choosing—or rather finding, in an environment where ‘coldest and meanest kisses were at famine prices’—a lover adequate to her longing”(Boumelha 51). From the outset, Eustacia is aware of the fact that her dilemma is ‘want of an object to live for—that’s all is the matter with me!’(RN 151). On Clym’s arrival from Paris, she goes to mummers’ party because she needs some purpose in her life to keep her going: ‘She had come out to see a man who might possibly have the power to deliver her soul from a

most deadly oppression. What was Wildeve? Interesting, but inadequate. Perhaps she would see a sufficient hero tonight' (RN 157).

Hardy affirms his philosophy of life in the destined doom of wavering, passionate and exceptional Eustacia Vye. She has her own way of living life, or in other words she asserts her will which evokes heavenly wrath. Eustacia is described as 'a feminised version of Prometheus' (Boumelha 55). Lawrence in his *Study of Thomas Hardy* maintains that Eustacia is a woman who loves novelty in her life. She is passionate enough in her love with Wildeve, then she dotes over newly returned Clym Yeobright for some time. She herself does not know what are her expectations from life, but one thing is certain that she wants 'some form of self-realization; she wants to be herself, to attain herself' (Lawrence 13). She could escape her death and destruction by being moderate in her inclinations towards one or the other man. Clym does not seem to notice at party that the 'fantastic guise' camouflages the sensitive Eustacia whose scope extends to 'feeling and in making others feel' (RN 171). All the people 'with strong feelings and unusual characters' (Lawrence 14) who are exceptional in every way are crushed and only those survive who are steady, humble, ordinary and commonplace. In short, 'Let a man will for himself, and he is destroyed. He must will according to the established system' (ibid 14).

It is a duality of view which is to persist to her death itself, so that we do not know, when she drowns in the weir, whether she accidentally mistook her path on her way to elope with Wildeve, or whether, overcome by weariness and despair, she gave up her life for lost. At one point she exclaims passionately to Wildeve: 'But do I desire unreasonably much in wanting what is called life-music, poetry, passion, war, and all the

beating and pulsing that is going on in the great arteries of the world?' A question to which there can be no simple answer for Eustacia. Her desire is eminently reasonable in that it reveals her appetite for life; eminently mistaken, in that such an appetite can never be satisfied in terms of the images of romance provided in *The Lady's History* she read at school (Gregor 87- 88).

Lack of interest in everything drifts Eustacia towards resignation which may be the cause of ultimate destruction. After being disappointed in marital relationship, Eustacia returns to her house and prefers to remain indoors in a horrifying state of mind. Her indifference towards the existence of everything held sacred by man or gods makes her situation worse. She becomes a silent onlooker without any sense of belonging to her surroundings. 'To have lost is less disturbing than to wonder if we may possibly have won: and Eustacia could now, like other people at such a stage, take a standing-point outside herself, observe herself as a disinterested spectator, and think what a sport for Heaven this woman Eustacia was'(RN 407).

Despair, misery, wretchedness and resignation are the suitable words to convey Eustacia's sense of fractured self. The repetition of 'I' in the last few chapters of the book shows Eustacia's exhaustion with social propriety, obligations and the prescriptive roles imposed upon her. Charley, stable-lad, tries to distract her by building up bon fire. Eustacia comes out of self imposed confinement when Wildeve appears on the spot mistaking Charley's bonfire signal to be Eustacia's call. Wildeve perceives her wretchedness in the flame-light illuminating her face and is perturbed to see nothing but an epitome of misery standing in front of him. He is astonished at a picture of complete sorrow which she is presenting. He conveys his agony:"You do not deserve

what you have got, Eustacia; you are in great misery; I see it in your eyes, your mouth, and all over you. My poor, poor girl! He stepped over the bank. ‘You are beyond everything unhappy!’”(RN 408). Wildeve feels miserable when she tells him that she has been blamed for not letting Clym's mother in the house. Her weariness finds expression in her hysteric articulations: “Her quiet breathing had grown quicker with his words. ‘I- I-’ she began, and then burst into quivering sobs, shaken to the very heart by the unexpected voice of pity—a sentiment whose existence in relation to herself she had almost forgotten”(RN 408).

At this point, Eustacia seems to be really weary of ‘I’ and the obligations it imposes on her in the way of her self-realization. Clym makes a case against her. He blames Eustacia for not letting his mother in the house when she visits them. Unable to defend her negligence, she quits the house in exasperation. She hates herself for ever revealing to Wildeve that despite all her efforts to fulfill her duty as a faithful wife, her marriage with Clym has been a disastrous failure. She tries to conceal her misery egoistically: ‘I did not send for you—don't forget it, Damon; I am in pain, but I did not send for you! As a wife, at least, I've been straight’ (RN 409). Wildeve feels himself responsible for her wretchedness which she denies ‘Not you. This place I live in’ (RN 409).

The inhabitants of Egdon Heath condemn Eustacia for what she is not. As a consequence, she is nullified and marginalized by them. She is held responsible for a crime which she has not committed, and finally, is neglected and forsaken by her husband.

Clym's perception of Eustacia is circumscribed by a host of assumptions that range around the polarised stereotypes of Goddess and Whore; but Hardy's own perspective, even while invoking visions of Goddesses, emphasises Eustacia's painfully isolated, nullified existence. If (recalling George Sand's words), Eustacia's urge to better herself is obstructed by a society that denies her individual existence, then Hardy will not only deny that society its ultimate appropriation of her—neither man nor institution will hold her— but her will ensure that she remains unclassifiable, atypical, bearing no resemblance to male circumscriptions (Morgan 81).

Misrecognition of Eustacia's worth dooms her and precipitates her destruction.

There is only one person who is desperate to do something to secure her from her doom—that is, Wildeve. His desperation is explicit when he asks 'Is there anything on the face of the earth that a man can do to make you happier than you are at present? If there is, I will do it. You may command me, Eustacia, to the limit of my influence;...Surely something can be done to save you from this! Such a rare plant in such a wild place it grieves me to see' (RN 409). At this point she has already realized that Wildeve's assistance would not be taken as a noble gesture; rather it would be considered as something immoral as each of them is married.

From one point of view this reads as a judicial description of adolescent fervour, a diagnosis of the source of Eustacia's weakness and one that can only move the author to reproof if not to irony. But from another point of view, it is the 'eating loneliness' of Eustacia's days which commands attention, and the absence of 'love', whose language alone can help her to an understanding of herself. In one way it is right to think that her 'love' is not bound up with a particular person, it is invoked to overcome some deep-seated malaise within her about her own identity. Her appearance accorded well with [her] rebelliousness, and the shady splendour of her beauty was the real surface of the sad and shifted warmth within her.' In that remark, untouched by irony, we feel what it is in Eustacia which prompts Hardy's sympathy—a consciousness of the way in which her intensities of feeling, her capacity for response, are never to find satisfactory expression (Gregor 87).

Eustacia's 'malaise' or chaotic state of mind finds its best expression in the stormy aspect Egdon Heath wears on the night of her death. She is devastated by the inadequacies surrounding her. A terrible conflict ensues in her soul after which she is resolved to elope with Wildeve: 'It was a night which led the traveller's thoughts instinctively to dwell on nocturnal scenes of disaster in the chronicles of the world...' (RN 425). She reaches Rainbarrow and halts, once again, to think over but perceives perfect harmony 'between the chaos of her mind and the chaos of the world without' (RN 425). She presents a pathetic picture not only by standing exposed to the cruelty of tumultuous weather, but also cut off as a solitary figure in perfect 'isolation from all humanity' (RN 425). The 'slightly rocking movement that her feelings imparted to her person' (ibid 425) denotes intensified aspect of her suffering. This extreme unhappiness of Eustacia is unbearable to look at before her ultimate destruction. The tumult of her inner being is reinforced by the 'tearfulness of the outer scene' (RN 426), and there is something unusual about sobbing and soliloquizing aloud for a woman who is 'neither old, deaf, crazed, nor whimsical' (RN 426) or altogether insane. Her desperation for freedom from cultural images and dissatisfaction over her lot are expressed in these words:

Can I go, can I go?? She moaned. 'He's not great enough for me to give myself to—he does not suffice for my desire!...If he had been a Saul or a Bonaparte—ah! But to break my marriage vow for him—it is too poor a luxury!...How I have tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me! I do not deserve my lot! she cried in a frenzy of bitter revolt. O, the cruelty of putting me into this ill-conceived world! I was capable of much; but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by things beyond my control! O, how

hard it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all!(RN 426).

By embracing death, Eustacia defeats a repertoire of cultural images, and triumphs over signification in her extinction. Bound to time and space, ‘her boundless desire is to be boundlessly desired’(Boumelha 55). Eustacia’s sobbing before she drowns herself reminds us of her sighs in the beginning of the novel as if she is trying very hard to keep alive the smoldering or dying embers of her stormy existence. After thorough deliberation over the poor bargain she had made by eloping with Wildeve as his mistress and by forsaking her duty as a wife, she drowns herself into Shadwaterweir to put an end to her agitated existence. In order to achieve her ends, she needs to transcend the limits imposed upon her. Her self-aggrandisement does not let her stoop low; rather she chooses an appropriate way out of her predicament. In an article “The Woman Shall Bear her Inequity”, Sara. A. Malton reads Eustacia’s death as a social discipline and holds the society responsible for her ultimate doom—society which stigmatizes woman if she possesses zeal for life.

How could there be any good in a woman every body spoke ill-off? In the most emotionally charged scene between husband and wife in Thomas Hardy’s *The Return of the Native*, Clym Yeobright thus finally succumbs to the view of Eustacia Vye’s identity that has been constructed by public surveillance and conjecture. Deemed a witch, a temptress, and even a murderess by the voice of the social ‘everybody’, Eustacia is liable to the terms of such judgment, the consequences of which are most obviously literalized in her suicide by drowning. Yet punishment itself also definitively shapes identity on Egdon Heath. The numerous forms of punishment applied to Eustacia—stabbing, torture of her effigy, expulsion from her marriage—serve to confirm social interpretation, unequivocally defining her as witch, rebel, and, in short, fallen (Malton 147).

Frustrated by her typical image among the inhabitants of Egdon Heath, she wants to live among those who are utterly unaware of that stereotypical, vicious identity of her. That is why she feels uncomfortable in her native environment of Egdon Heath and feels it easier to adjust in the glamorous, but alien environment of Paris. 'Her death must become a victory over life—a mortal life that had, to her, been empty of significance and purpose. For who and what had she been? She does nothing, goes nowhere, and apart from her status as Clym's wife, she is totally without identity' (Morgan 81). Clym wants her submission to his will which implies total disintegration of her 'self' by merging it into his identity as furze cutter's wife.

Eustacia cannot be accepted anything other than a rebellious grand-daughter of Captain Vye, incompetent and unfaithful wife of Clym, ruthless and murderess daughter-in-law of Mrs. Yeobright, mistress of Wildeve and usurper of Thomasin's happiness in marital tie with Wildeve—a woman whose effigy is melted so that it may ward off her evil influence over the ones who are suffering. Eustacia, “‘the rare bird from hotter climes’ (RN 100) ...was remorselessly tracked by a ‘barbarian’ who ‘rested neither night nor day’ until he had hunted her down and finally shot her”(Morgan 74). She is hunted down by representatives of patriarchy like Captain Vye, Clym, Venn and Wildeve. The unknown remains the unknown for Clym who, in his blindness, could not discover ‘a radical, potential woman-on-the-barricades’ (Morgan 78). Eustacia finds her release from her imprisonment in death alone, as John Bayley points out: “In death she lies with a tranquility unknown to her stormy existence. ‘The expression of her finely carved mouth was pleasant, as if a sense of

dignity had just compelled her to leave off speaking.’ Hardy was never to write a more expressive epitaph.”³

Hardy’s heroines, placed in a social context inherently in clash with their mental and psychological composition, consistently attempt to get an unlikely fulfillment. Ahead of their time in their independent thinking, they choose death as an alternative to have their own space to live. Hardy stresses the point that when they are not given social integration and society does not give them their breathing space, they destroy themselves rather than compromise on their independence and freedom. To embrace physical or psychological death is not an easy task which may be accomplished by cowards. The society that denies them their right to be and becomes a threat to their self-realization has to face a reciprocal resistance and resentment from these rare individuals, though ultimately the system wins and the defiant individuals have to face destruction.

Notes

¹ The term used by Rosemarie Morgan in her analysis of Hardy's rare women to refer to their psychic constitution and sexual preoccupations. P.50

² The term 'Prototype' has been used by Rosalind Miles while referring to Hardy's women to point out the characteristics they have in common with women, in general , no matter how different they are.

³ From John Bayley's introduction to Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native*.p. xxviii (listed)

Chapter VIII

Hardy's Affinity to Modern Writers in Depiction of Women

Twentieth century is characterized by unparalleled emotional and psychological peculiarities: fractured or fragmented self, “destabilized subjectivity”¹, elusiveness of desire, a sense of emptiness and futility, psychological turmoil, withdrawal from external world in order to focus on inner psychic realities, death drive leading to morbid growth of depression, neurosis and suicidal inclination. The term ‘modern’ entails with it certain literary connotations which are reflective of authors’ preoccupations. Modernism brings to mind a set of tendencies shared by the authors writing in the post-war period, but the roots of literary modernism can be traced back to the age preceding it. Hardy is one of those authors whose works qualify him to be a man of modernistic caliber. His keen observation records in anticipation these by-products of modernism. It needs acute sensibility to discover the riches that Hardy’s art contains.

Self-estrangement due to excessive self-enclosure within one’s over-developed consciousness is a product of twentieth century post-war anxieties. Hardy can be seen as a modernist in whose novels the reader witnesses an individual struggling hopelessly in the clutches of oppressive solitude within one's self and desiring the emancipation of his soul from the confines of time and space. There is an all-pervasive gloom overshadowing Hardy’s world.

“Generally Hardy was too deeply concerned with ‘the plight of being alive’”
(Duffin 252).

Jacobus writes that the ‘ache of modernism’ pervades the world of Wessex novels, and that modernism is characterized by a feeling of alienation, of a detachment from place and tradition, of purposelessness and an uncertainty about self-identity (qtd in Stave 151).

Hardy employs certain techniques in the depiction of women for which modern authors are indebted to him. Moreover, such traits qualify him to be called a modernist. Grace Melbury's phrase in *The Woodlanders* is apt to be applied to Hardy who combines ‘modern nerves with primitive feelings’ and is ‘doomed by such co-existence to be numbered among the distressed’ (Giordano 46). ‘The ache of modernism’ (ToD 146) is echoed in Hardy’s literary compositions. He is at pains to reveal that those who try to make sense out of life’s non-sense suffer from melancholy and depression. His characters are invested with inherent sadness and despondency, which propel them to look for some sort of escape from their devastated states. To overcome their feelings of depression and to fill in the void inside them, they are desperate to hold onto some anchorage which could salvage them from going insane. Giordano identifies in Hardy’s novels ‘a courageous and conscious acknowledgement of the suicidal impulse as an understandable response to the modern condition’ (qtd in Harvey 168).

Women represented in Hardy’s fiction are subject to fluctuating mood swings and predisposed to end their lives in order to find the comfort denied to them in this world. Their ultimate resignation and a sense of alienation point to their self-destruction; suicide is the common destiny awaiting them all. “Many of

the characters choose ‘the ignominy of death in failure’ to complete the pattern of their existence: At the end of their lives, even if they do not actually commit suicide, they come to a suicidal passivity, a self destructive will not to live” (qtd in Giordano 44).

Lawrence, while commenting on the cause of Hardy’s self-destructive characters: ‘What was there in their position that was necessarily tragic? Necessarily painful it was, but they were not at war with God, only with society. Yet they were all cowed by the mere judgment of man upon them, and all the while by their own souls they were right. ‘The mere judgment of man...their own souls...,’ the nerve of the difference in outlook between Hardy and Lawrence lies exposed in that distinction (Gregor 229-30).

Hardy boldly takes up the issues which other novelists would have avoided in the Victorian age or would never have emphasized in their texts. He creates psychologically intricate characters entangled in complicated situations. He seems to have a temperamental inclination to look for grey areas and ‘his venturing into taboo areas and his insights into neuroses anticipate the work of later psychologists such as Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung and Alfred Adler’ (qtd in Harvey 169). Freud in his book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* states that ‘the aim of all life is death’² and any individual who has a passion to live must be tortured at the hands of destiny and perish in the struggle. In other words, an individual who desires delight must pay for it in one way or the other. ‘Thus the pleasure principal lodged in individual desire, ends up, with a certain uncanny reversibility, serving the death instinct’ (Sadoff 160). Tess and Eustacia embody a very strong death instinct propelled by their ‘appetite for joy’; the element of fatality is inherent in their constitution.

Modernism is marked by a morbid tendency towards self-destruction. Hardy's women stand as antecedents of self-destructive characters delineated in the twentieth century literature. Eustacia expresses her death wish more than once when she fails, despite all her efforts, to live her life the way she wants to. The first episode which catches the reader's attention is when Eustacia leaves her husband's house after her confrontation with him and returns to her grandfather's house. Her preoccupation with a brace of pistols hanging from her grandfather's bed betrays her fascination for death. 'The idea seemed to gather force within her, and she remained in a fixed attitude nearly ten minutes when a certain finality was expressed in her gaze, and no longer the blankness of indecision'(RN 402).

Similarly, Eustacia's discontentment with life is shown in her strong death wish when she asks Charley to bring back the loaded pistol, which he has locked up.

Why should I not die if I wish? she said tremulously. 'I have made a bad bargain with life, and I am weary of it—weariness. And now you have hindered my escape. O, why did Charley! What makes death painful except the thought of others' grief?—and that is absent in my case, for not a sigh would follow me (RN 403).

The modernistic tendency of cherishing death instinct secretly is revealed not only in Eustacia's verbal utterances but in her dreams as well. Her unconscious sends her coded message through a dream, which Leonard W. Deen interprets to be her latent death instinct. The dance with the helmeted knight in her dreams veils 'Dionysian self-destructiveness in Eustacia' (124). She embraces

oblivion, death and obscurity as the most desirable substitutes for her situation in life.

By letting Eustacia speak her mind, Hardy presents her as a product of anxieties which modern conditions are producing. Eustacia's habit of sighing inadvertently at most crucial times of her life camouflages some deep rooted melancholy which cannot be attributed to Wildeve's infidelity or Clym's indifference. She confesses to Wildeve, when he appears on the scene for the first time responding to her bonfire signal, 'But perhaps it is not wholly because of you that I get gloomy,' she archly added. 'It is in my nature to feel like that. It was born in my blood, I suppose' (RN 73). Eustacia has some inherent melancholic ingredient which propels her to embrace death.

Death-wish is a delight taken in the pain that accompanies it. It is associated with a pleasure taken in afflicting pain upon oneself by mastering over the sense of loss. Tess's 'desire to be buried and dead' (Sadoff 157), her entreaties 'to be punished, whipped and crushed'; 'once victim, always victim, that's the law' and 'I am ready' at Stonehenge, are but expressions of violent death wish (ibid 160). Tess does express her desire not to have existed at all, which reaffirms the lurking death instinct at work in her psychic structure. She is possessed by Alec and has love-hate relationship with him; she does feel hatred for herself because she cannot get Alec out of her system; she loves sexual experience with him. 'Hating and loathing herself for what she calls weakness, she wishes she had never been born after Alec seduces her. At this early point in the novel, there are hints that non-existence is a possible way out of overwhelming problems'(Bassein 109-110). Tess wishes to transcend the

confines of body, time, space, customs, limitations and conventions. Tess's quest for ideal sort of love, her desire for transcendence and her futile effort to obliterate 'her past and her former self' is actually 'an attempt to escape from the consciousness of pain' (Hyman 114). Moreover, it betrays death instinct at work. She does rehearse it by looking at it squarely, when in the sleep-walking scene Angel puts her in the coffin assuming her to be dead. 'Finding no adequate response for her needs either in heaven or in earth, in the social world or the natural one, she lacks the support necessary for going on'(ibid118). Her physical death ensues her emotional and psychological death. She, like Hardy's other exceptional characters, seeks integration within the bounds of time and space or disintegration to finish the drama of pain and misery. In order to get rid of her body and all it needs, her soul aspires to transcend the confines of incorporeal imprisonment.

To portray a death wish or suicidal impulse in characters is not incidental in Hardy's world. It is one of the characteristics which dissociate Hardy from his contemporaries and aligns him with modernists. In *Jude the Obscure* pathos of Sue's tragedy lies, to quote Jude, in 'the coming universal wish not to live'(Jude 356). Jude inherits it genetically because Jude, on hearing his family's history from his aunt, straight away tries to commit suicide by walking on the ice, which cracks under his feet, yet he is not swallowed up in the round pond. In desperation he thinks 'what was he reserved for? He supposed he was not a sufficiently dignified person for suicide. Peaceful death abhorred him as a subject, and would not take him' (Jude 91).

In consoling Sue over the death of her children killed by Father Time, Jude holds a view: 'It was in his nature to do it. The doctor says there are such boys springing up amongst us—boys of a sort unknown in the last generation—the outcome of new views of life. They seem to see all its terrors before they are old enough to have staying power to resist them' (Jude 356). Furthermore, the death instinct seems to be at work in Hardy's exceptional and aristocratic characters: 'a Manston, a Troy, a Eustacia or Wildeve, a Henchard, Tess or Jude must die'(Casagrande 38). Though supportive of some of these characters, 'Hardy, out of moral timidity, cannot champion what he most values—the emotional, i.e. sexual freedom embodied' in their person (ibid 38).

D. H. Lawrence owes a great deal to Hardy in the delineation of his characters, in the portrayal of landscapes and his deliberate choice of diction loaded with sexual overtones. Lawrence's imagery reminds the reader of Hardy's erotic imagery when Hardy could not be explicit about describing sexual encounters. The landscape in Hardy's and Lawrence's narration, itself becomes suggestive of sexual interplay, be it between man and woman or between man and an abstraction. 'But perhaps Hardy, to some extent a D. H. Lawrence born out of his due time, felt that, even so, he had been unable to say exactly what he wanted to say'(Gibson 212). In order to show the affinity between these two giants, two passages are quoted and interpreted; one from Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* and the other from D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow*.

The scene in which Troy exhibits swordplay in Bathsheba's presence is widely acknowledged to be loaded with sexual connotations. Even the title of the chapter "The Hollow Amid the Ferns" is suggestive of sexual encounter between Bathsheba and Troy. Hardy touches upon such subjects evasively by deliberate choice of diction: Bathsheba's 'trembling and panting', 'a soft brushing by of garments' and the words spoken by Troy to Bathsheba during sword play 'as if you were sowing corn' and 'as if you were hedging', 'reaping' and 'threshing' are erotic in their origin as they signify the phenomenon of procreation (FFMC 205-206). The movement of the sword through air with a sharp hissing sound stirs Bathsheba's 'adventurous spirit' which begins 'to find some grains of relish in these highly novel proceedings' during which Troy assures her that he will not hurt her if she lets him do what he wishes (FFMC 207). Hardy's references to her hip, ribs, to a caterpillar sitting 'on the front of her bodice as his resting place' and the glistening point of the sword 'towards her bosom' are but clear hints at Hardy's art of concealing in language what he is at pains to reveal to the Victorian reader (FFMC 209). Gibson deciphers meaning of the highly erotic language of the above-mentioned passage. 'Troy is like a peacock putting on a mating display. His sword is described as being like a living thing, and, as if to emphasize the sexual implications, Hardy makes him compare his sword strokes to 'sowing' and 'threshing', words long associated in the folk-songs Hardy knew so well with the physical act of love-making' (197). Let us compare this passage full of erotic imagery with another passage taken from Lawrence's *The Rainbow* in which Anna Victrix, Tom Brangwen's daughter and Will Brangwen's wife, after fighting persistent battle against Will's fanatic religious creed, goes with

him in the cathedral. She feels helpless to see Will's unusual attachment with the cathedral. He passionately loves that building people call church, as if it were his bride with whom he desperately seeks consummation. By looking at it 'His soul leapt up into the gloom, into possession, it reeled, it swooned with a great escape, it quivered in the womb, in the hush and the gloom of fecundity, like seed of procreation in ecstasy'(Rainbow 168). Lawrence's diction contains the sexual overtones reminiscent of Hardy's narrative sexual undertones: 'Out of the doors of the womb he had come, putting aside the wings of the womb, and proceeding into the light'(ibid 168). The whole description contains words like 'womb, fecundity, clinching and mating, leap and thrust, darkness and light, ecstasy, oneness' etc and brings before the reader's eyes an act of actual consummation with a desirable woman.

Here the stone leapt up from the plain earth, leapt up in a manifold, clustered desire each time, up, away from the horizontal earth, through twilight and dusk and the whole range of desire, through the swerving, the declination, ah, to the ecstasy, the touch, to the meeting, and the consummation, the meeting, the clasp, the close embrace, the neutrality, the perfect swooning, the timeless ecstasy. There his soul remained, at the apex of the arch, clinched in the timeless ecstasy, consummated (Rainbow 169).

Anna, jealous of his ultimate fulfillment, does spoil his intercourse with the cathedral by showing him the hideousness of the woman's face carved in stones in the cathedral, knowing his indifference and coldness to her own existence. She mocks at his stupidity of worshipping 'a shapely heap of dead matter—but dead, dead' (ibid 171). She feels triumphant once she destroys his passion and ecstatic mood by showing him the limitation of it all.

The similarities and dissimilarities in the art of characterization with regard to women between Hardy and Lawrence further show Lawrence's indebtedness to Hardy. Ian Gregor's observation that 'Where *Jude* ends *The Rainbow* begins' (Casagrande 45) is highly significant. Sue is a precursor of Ursula Brangwen: There is a remarkable resemblance between Sue's and Ursula's 'masculine drive for freedom and power' (ibid 50). While drawing distinction between 'the virginal' (Sue) and 'the sensual' (Arabella), Dutta states:

Caught between what Stubbs calls 'rapacious sensuality'(Arabella) and 'obsessive virginity'(Sue), Jude will become a prototype for D. H. Lawrence's Paul Morel who is torn between the virginal Miriam and the sensual Clara. The unstated but clearly implied thesis of both *Jude* and *Sons and Lovers* seems to be that Jude and Paul make a sorry mess of their lives not because they are inherently weak or culpable but their women lamentably fail them (Dutta 116-17).

It is not easy to miss similarities between Paul's obsessive association with his mother in *Sons and Lovers* by D. H. Lawrence and Clym's unusual fascination with Mrs. Yeobright in *The Return of the Native*. In Clym's character Hardy presents a 'modern, Oedipally fixated intellectual' (qtd in Harvey 170). In this way Hardy provides foundation for Freud's later theory of Oedipus complex which, in a child, leads to such abnormal affiliations. In presenting Clym and Mrs. Yeobright's relationship, Hardy anticipates Paul and Mrs Morel's unusual liaison. In both cases, mothers die due to the frustration they feel when their sons get divided between their affections for their mothers and their love for women of their heart. Mrs Morel unusual connection with Paul can be summed up in these words: 'She felt as if the navel string that had connected its frail little body with hers had not been broken'(Templeton 63). Clym's tragedy lies in his hopeless struggle to reconcile his filial devotion with

'passionate love for the voluptuous Eustacia Vye' and it further replicates 'the private dilemma Lawrence had transformed into the struggle of Paul Moral in *Sons and Lovers* only two years before' (Casagrande 36).

Hardy enables the reader to focus on mother-son relationship by referring to Clym's reading of *Oedipus*. Clym's efforts in trying to persuade Eustacia for reconciliation and his unconscious ravings over the loss of his mother are clues to his obsessive affiliation with his mother. Clym's remorse for being the sole cause of her death is beyond consolation. His unmitigated grief persists despite Eustacia's persistent entreaties: 'Then his distress had overwhelmed him, and he longed for death as a field labourer longs for the shade. It was the pitiful sight of a man standing in the very focus of sorrow' (RN 371). He cannot overcome his sense of guilt that he did not make advances to see her when she got offended with him for his disobedience in his choice of future wife. Clym curses himself for ever being cruel to her and wants Eustacia to join him in condemnation for being neglectful in his duty as a son.

Sometimes his condition had been one of utter remorse, unsoftened by a single tear of pure sorrow: and then he writhed as he lay, fevered far more by thought than by physical ills. 'If I could only get one assurance that she did not die in a belief that I was resentful,' he said one day when in this mood, 'it would be better to think of than a hope of heaven. But that I cannot do.'

'You give yourself up too much to this wearying despair,' said Eustacia. 'Other men's mothers have died.'

'That doesn't make the loss of mine less. Yet it is less the loss than the circumstances of the loss. I sinned against her, and on that account there is no light for me' (371-72).

Clym is so much possessed by his mother's love that even after becoming preacher, his sermon contains a moral which is not to say 'No' to mothers' wishes. A particular place should be assigned to them even if one holds as prestigious a position as the king of the state. D. H. Lawrence replicates this relationship in *Sons and Lovers*: Paul's over whelming passion for his mother does not let him do anything successfully in life. His future course of action is always uncertain; his mother's love proves to be a hurdle in determining his directions in life. Likewise Hardy's heroines reflect certain tendencies in their depiction due to which the reader's mind seeks to establish his affinity with modern writers.

Mirror plays a vital role in Hardy's novels as his heroines' obsession with self has occasioned a debate over their narcissistic tendency. Frequent references to mirror in a narrative directs mind to read it as a symbol of self-consciousness of an individual. Bathsheba, Sue and Eustacia betray narcissistic tendency unconsciously in their gestures and actions. In creating Sue, Hardy has done a marvelous job: 'He created one of the few totally narcissistic women in literature; but he did so at the same time as he made her something rather wonderful. Her complexity lies in the way in which Hardy managed to present the full, bitter sterility of her narcissism and yet tried to exonerate her'(Alvarez 118). This narcissism blurs Sue's judgment and her reasoning faculty. She likes in Phillotson what she already has — intellect— while Jude reflects that physical part of her the gratification of which she seeks, though with reluctance. She loves in others what she actually possesses in herself, which is a sort of self-appraisal. Experience with an undergraduate

or Jude is nourishing for her as she drains them of their vitality and manliness—derives from them what she requires; but it is exhaustive for them whom she leaves devastated. ‘She could only receive the highest stimulus, which she must inevitably seek, from a man who put her in constant jeopardy. Her essentiality rested upon her remaining intact’ (Lawrence 72). Sue’s demand for love is too intense, but she is incapable of reciprocating the same when demanded from her. Jude condemns Sue for her frigidity and excess of self-love more than once. Sue goes to see Arabella, Jude’s former wife, at her lodging and admires her own charm as compared to Arabella’s: ‘She may have seemed handsome enough in profile under the lamps, but a frowziness was apparent this morning; and the sight of her own charms in the looking glass made Sue’s manner bright, till she reflected what a meanly sexual emotion this was in her, and hated herself for it’ (Jude 287). Sue almost drives Jude insane and he yells in fury that she is ‘incapable of real love’ (Jude 261). By exercising a little bit of deliberate reserve in giving herself up to Jude at his will, she fuels her self-love—the underlying motive of which is to fan Jude’s passion and keep it ablaze.

Bathsheba’s self love is manifested in the beginning of the novel in Bathsheba’s ‘saucy assumption that the desirability of her existence could not be questioned...’(FFMC 25). By employing Lacanian reading to Hardy’s texts, Marjorie Garson discovers narcissistic tendency in his heroines like Bathsheba Everdene (qtd in Harvey 174). Her self-consciousness becomes explicit when, oblivious of her surroundings, she takes out mirror to have a look at her countenance, though she does not intend to adjust anything. That is

very typical of someone who has the habit of inspecting oneself in a mirror repeatedly for reassurance—a distinct trait of narcissist.

There was no necessity for her looking in the glass...she simply observed herself as a fair product of Nature in the feminine kind, her thoughts seeming to glide into far-off though likely dramas in which men would play a part—vistas of probable triumphs—the smiles being of a phase suggesting that hearts were imagined as lost and won (FFMC 13).

Bathsheba's vanity, arrogance, conceit and self-consciousness are further verified by the words spoken by the Waggoners coming from Casterbridge Fair. Their conversation is overheard by Oak: 'It is said that every night at going to bed she looks in the glass to put on her night cap properly' (FFMC 54). It further strengthens Oak's conviction that 'she's a very vain feymell—so 'tis said here and there' (ibid 54). Bathsheba on her way back from corn market observes Farmer Boldwood who does not raise his eyes which Bathsheba takes as an offence committed to her irresistible charms: 'as if Bathsheba and her charms were thin air for him'(FFMC 108). A woman like Bathsheba can take anything but indifference to the exploits of her femininity. Her better judgment deserts her and blinds her to detecting deceit in those who exaggerate her. She is entrapped by Troy's praise and flattery—something she desires due to her obsessive self-love. Troy's admiration of her charms touches the delicate strings of her heart; he wins her over simply by fueling her narcissism. She is lured into a conversation with Troy when he tells her about news abroad that she is considered a charming and 'most fascinating woman'(FFMC 193). The sense of modesty stops her from immediately agreeing to this view knowing well the truth of it. 'Capitulation—that was the purport of the simple reply, guarded as it was—capitulation, unknown to

herself' (FFMC 194). Bathsheba is associated with 'goddess Venus whose iconic attribute is the mirror, from which the symbol for woman evolved' (qtd in Stave 26). Calling for Farmer Oak to rejoin her, after he has been fired, has a certain condescending about it. Oak's refusal offends her vanity beyond tolerance 'Oh, oh that's his answer! Where does he get his airs? Who am I, then, to be treated like that? Shall I beg to a man who has begged to me?'(FFMC 159).

The dominating feature of a narcissist is obsessive self-love and looking with approbation at anyone who is willing to fuel it. It blinds the reasoning faculty to an extent that one is prone to make blunders. Bathsheba—strong willed, energetic and endowed with shrewdness—makes a blunder only when her self-love is fueled by Troy's admiration; consequently he gets the upper hand. The admiration or appreciation of one's accomplishment evokes certain regard and fidelity towards the other person, be it a false show of flattery. Bathsheba is deluded into thinking that Troy is admiring her beauty in a true sense and develops a soft corner for him in her heart, hence associating herself with a man unworthy of her. It makes her blind to the true devotion of two worthy suitors—Gabriel Oak and Boldwood.

Eustacia betrays her narcissistic tendency in her reference to Saul or Bonaparte, for whom she would have parted with her husband without a second thought, because anyone falling short of her expectations would not suffice for her. 'Poor bargains' of life are not acceptable to her. Neither Wildevor nor Clym is worthy of her. Probably her aloofness, loneliness, desolation and stand still position at the top of Rainbarrow with a telescope

signifies her search for something unattainable. It can also be interpreted as her desire to be at such a conspicuous place from where the whole world can be held in contempt. Telescope serves as a mirror for Eustacia through which she surveys the darkness of her soul—the darkness and gloom that envelops her. Eustacia's desire of being loved is too intense to be subsided. She herself acknowledges that at times it gets so intense that she thinks she will be consumed by it altogether. She puts herself on a pedestal from where she holds everything in contempt whether made by man or God. The self-love leads one to be egoistical in pursuing personal satisfaction, which when obstructed, has dire consequences.

Narcissistic tendency can be traced even in Hardy's amateur novel *Desperate Remedies* in the characters of Miss. Aldclyffe and Cytherea. Cytherea is hired as a maid to attend upon Miss Aldclyffe. The scene, which reveals heightened sensuality of Miss Aldclyffe, appears to be a revelation of Cytherea's self-love. Her mistress's artificial charms in the looking glass provoke her to return to her room. She stands in front of the mirror to ascertain her own impeccable beauty and compares it to her mistress's adorned one: 'Back in her room, Cytherea looks in her own glass at the reflection of 'her own magnificent resources in face and bosom.' and Hardy makes it clear their attractiveness is, in his own word, "unadorned" (Gibson 194).

Hardy treats women to be objects and subjects of sexuality simultaneously. On one hand, they invite onlookers to treat them as objects of gaze, hence betraying the author's voyeurism, while on the other hand, they elicit sexual responses by exploiting their charms. Tess is one of the supreme examples of

sexuality incarnated—a woman vulnerable to sensations of all sorts: ‘such a sheaf of susceptibilities that her pulse was accelerated by the touch, her blood driven to her finger-ends, and the cool arms flushed hot’ (ToD 207). Duffin is justified in his estimation of Tess: ‘That is to say that her mind had the touch of animalism in her flesh to respond to great external pressure’ (Duffin 220). He thereby alludes to Tess’s ‘incautiousness of character’ typical of her race (ibid 220). John Bayley reads in Eustacia’s gesture—of exposing her arm to Clym to show the wound inflicted upon her in Church—her unconscious sexual desire; and credits Wildeve by remarking that ‘he would have known immediately why Eustacia uncovered her arm in the first place.’³

Many critics consider Hardy’s females as objects of desire, hence negating their subjectivity. It is hard to question their sexuality when the meaning of their unconscious gestures is deciphered. The elusiveness of desire surfaces in their quest to find satisfaction in the world devoid of perfection. The frustration stems from the inadequacy of those on whom they keep pasting the image of their own ideals. It is not just Angel, Jude, Clym, Dr. Fitzpiers or Henry Knight whose ideals are shattered due to the inadequacies of their women; rather in the same manner Tess, Sue, Eustacia, Bathsheba, Grace Melbury and Elfride are equally disillusioned in their choices. They realize that they are aspiring for the ideal difficult to be achieved without the dissolution of corporeal existence.

Any passage in which Hardy introduces a female character can be picked up for analysis in the context of voyeurism. In the process of gazing and being gazed at, there occurs a ‘loss’; consequently female characters do not represent

what they are expected to represent. Hardy shifts his lens perpetually: the technique involves zooming in and out to focus on the minute details of his heroines in which the observer looking at them is supposed to be male.

Hardy really is a lover of women in the fullest physical sense His females are drawn from very close up; there is an almost myopic insistence upon the grain of their skin, and texture of hair. Sound, scent, mouth, cheeks, downy plumpness—no detail of their physical presence is allowed to escape our senses (qtd in J.Mitchell 158-59).

Hardy may be said to have anticipated the technique of cinematic art and Lacan's theory of gaze, which has been further expanded by Laura Mulvey (feminist film critic) to elaborate on the concept of visual pleasure in film and cinema.⁴ Hardy's texts abound in what is described by Laura Mulvey as 'fetishistic or voyeuristic' close-ups in which figure of the female is captured and shown in fragments in a moment of erotic contemplation, then implied male reader and narrator conspire to spy on female figure which is presented to be gazed at and judged from male's point of view. The figure of a female is observed with keen interest and the reader is taken into confidence in such a way that the visual effect becomes enjoyable for narrator as well as reader. Hardy, using his cinematic technique, zooms in and out while focusing on minute details against the infinite background of nature.

There the form stood, motionless as the hill beneath. Above the plain rose the hill, above the hill rose the barrow, and above the barrow rose the figure. Above the figure there was nothing that could be mapped elsewhere than on a celestial globe.

Such a perfect, delicate, and necessary finish did the figure give to the dark pile of hills that it seemed to be the only obvious justification of their outline. Without it, there was the dome without a lantern; with it the architectural demands of the mass were satisfied. The scene was strangely homogenous, in that the vale, the upland, the barrow, and the figure above it

amounted only to unity. Looking at this or that member of the group was not observing a complete thing, but a fraction of a thing....

And yet that is what happened. The figure perceptibly gave up its fixity, shifted a step or two and turned round. As if alarmed, it descended on the right side of the barrow, with the glide of a waterdrop down a bud, and then vanished. The movement had been sufficient to show more clearly the characteristics of the figure, and that it was a woman's (Tanner 200).

Hardy is an artist who paints visual pictures out of words. On the one hand he throws colours on the canvass, like a painter, to reflect the ambience of luxury rooms of rich ladies or the fluctuating moods of nature in changing seasons of yellow, pale and brown. On the other hand, the whole range of colours is reflected in the eyes of his heroines like Tess in a series of cyber shots: 'The eyes which are 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-around pupils that had no bottom' (ToD 107), what could be more mesmerizing than capturing the infinite hues of life all concentrated in the small space of pupil which encompasses the whole world.

These close-ups, occurring at regular intervals, have been well documented: Tess's "mobile peony mouth" and "ever-varying pupils, with their radiating fibrils of blue, and black, and grey, and violet" are repeatedly displayed in all their beauty, at once objectifying Tess and creating one of the most obvious erotic effects of the novel (J.Mitchell 188).

While describing landscapes or women, Hardy's photographic technique has been generally commended by critics. His novels are popular for the technique he employs to describe his women. He has been praised for his 'highly developed visual sensibility' (qtd in Durden 57). The souls are made visible in

fiery and flame-like colours as is the case with Eustacia, whereas the shades of hair reflect the darkness of winter night. The mornings are glittery and golden with slanting yellow lights and evenings are gray with silvery touch. Be it 'a yellow flood of reflected sunlight' which is 'produced by the passing of a load of newly trussed hay'(MC 249) that fills Lucetta's room or 'the red glow of the lamp and the two candle-flames...under the flood of late autumn sunlight'(WL 206) of Mrs. Charmond's boudoir, the changing hues—from pale to crimson—are captured with artistic skill. Hardy's enriching details betray his photographic talent. The following extract from *Desperate Remedies* supplements the argument under discussion: 'The direct blaze of the afternoon sun, partly refracted through the crimson curtains of the window, and heightened by reflections from the crimson-flock papers which covered the walls, and a carpet on the floor of the same tint, shone with a burning glow round the form of a lady standing close to Cytherea's front with the door in her hand' (DR 42-43). Hardy's keen observation presents duality of life—night and day—in light and shade captured in his photographic shots. These shots taken in isolation are then put together, like in a motion picture, to form a unified and organic picture of life—a picture to which Tanner refers while describing Tess's love for Angel which sustains her through gloom.

It enveloped her as a photosphere, irradiated her into forgetfulness of her past sorrows, keeping back the gloomy specters that would persist in their attempts to touch her—doubt, fear, moodiness, care, shame. She knew that they were waiting like wolves just outside the circumscribing light, but she had long spells of power to keep them in hungry subjection there...She walked in brightness, but she knew that in the background those shapes of darkness were always spread (Tanner 207).

Hardy is painfully aware of the enveloping darkness around a temporary halo of light—of human existence. Eustacia's bonfires are enshrouded with absolute darkness around on Egdon Heath. The icy cold and dark Weir engulfs warm and animated existence of Eustacia.

Hardy's affinity with Carl Jung becomes explicit once Hardy's characters are subjected to Jungian analysis to detect archetypal patterns in them. Apart from appreciating Hardy's cinematic skill, one can trace the existence of archetypes⁵ in his novels with regard to male and female characters. He seems to be familiar with the existence of two voices in an individual—male and female. They are in perfect equilibrium but when one of them becomes more pronounced than the other, the balance is lost, hence leading to the lopsidedness of personality.

Male voice is pronounced in those female characters who behave in a manly way. Bathsheba's behaviour in *Far From the Madding Crowd* reflects her overdeveloped animus⁶. No other woman, in the Victorian culture, would behave in a way Bathsheba behaves. Hardy, more than once, declares that Bathsheba is not given to blushes or shyness. She doesn't see any reason to marry if a woman can bear her responsibility and can fight her own battles. She is a sort of woman who rides horses; she makes men blush and they sink into nothingness in front of her. Bathsheba assumes a posture by leaning backwards to lie flat on a horseback 'in the manner demanded by the saddle, though hardly expected of the woman...' Farmer Oak could not discern the swiftness of the movement with which the action has been done. On perceiving that she has been spied upon, it is the man who blushes while 'the

maid not at all' (FFMC 25-26). Her first public appearance as a farmer at a marketplace in Casterbridge astonishes other farmers of Corn market. When dealing with corn dealers, she behaves like one of them and sounds like one who knows perfectly well how to adhere to her own price while reducing theirs without appearing mean. One of the dealers enquires about her and gets a reply from the other that she is 'Farmer Everdene's niece' who has 'turned away the baily, and swears she'll do everything herself' (FFMC 106).

The existence of archetypal pattern in Hardy's novels enables the reader to penetrate into the psychic reality of his characters. Shirley A. Stave explores the complex nature of Hardy's heroines and associates them with goddess figures to imply the existence of these patterns in his novels. Hardy facilitates his readers to explore those patterns even by focusing on their names. Bathsheba's name gives an ample idea about her psychic constitution.

Her name itself is a first indication of how Hardy intends us to view her. Her first name, which significantly is prebiblical, aligning her with the mythic rather than historical, means 'voluptuous' or 'daughter of satiety' while her last name means 'wild one' (Caless 10-11). Both names are apt. However, while Hardy could not assume readers would seek out such meanings, he could know for certain that they would immediately call to mind the biblical David's mistress, a woman of such beauty, sensuality, and power that she leads the Judiac king essentially to commit murder (Stave 30).

Bathsheba is a woman of iron nerves who seems to be a 'metropolitan policeman' on her night tours when she examines nooks, corners, door locks, homestead and stable to detect if there is anything amiss that needs her immediate attention before going to bed. Only a woman of exceptional will power can do such challenging tasks which Bathsheba undertakes. Bathsheba

proves her strength in the terrible storm when she comes, out of agitation and concern for her corn, to help Gabriel in saving sheaths from the devastating effects of storm. Her husband and the rest should have been alarmed by the terrible storm, but she finds them asleep in the barn in a drunken state which would have disappointed any woman of ordinary nerves. Hardy uses a word 'headstrong maid' for her more than once. She tells Gabriel when he doesn't respond to her query regarding her husband as to where he is? 'Don't think that I am a timid woman and can't endure things' (FFMC 281).

Another instance symbolic of Bathsheba's overdeveloped animus is that she sends the Valentine to Farmer Boldwood, while it should have been vice versa. When Farmer Boldwood blames her for her thoughtless trick of sending him the Valentine when she meant nothing but jest, she makes it plain to him that her childhood circumstances have made her heartless by driving all gentleness out of her. When Boldwood reproaches her bitterly for the prank she has played upon him she bursts out '...I have nobody in the world to fight my battles for me; ...yet if a thousand of you sneer and say things against me, I will not be put down!' (FFMC 230). When she is betrayed by Troy and becomes the talk of the town, her servants particularly Liddy (her confidante) alludes to her imprudence. At this juncture Bathsheba shows such an aggression that Liddy is compelled to quit her: 'And dear miss, you won't harry me and shout at me! Because you seem to swell so tall as a lion then, and it frightens me! Do you know, I fancy you would be a match for any man when you are in one o' your takings' (FFMC 223).

Bathsheba's 'Amazonian image' (FFMC 223) is reinforced when she considers Liddy's remarks about herself. She is astonished and perplexed: 'I hope I am not a bold sort of maid-mannish?'(FFMC 223). The word 'mannish' implies that deep inside she is pondering over her being manly in certain ways. After discovering Troy's infidelity and deception in trapping her and marrying her, she walks 'in rebelliousness like a caged leopard.' She recalls her long held views against marriage and detests 'to become the humbler half of an indifferent matrimonial whole...' (FFMC 306).

Archetypal pattern is not only discernable in Hardy's female characters but in his males as well. Boldwood's blushes in the presence of Bathsheba account for his overdeveloped anima. Boldwood who keeps up appearances of a strong man reduces himself to begging for Bathsheba's sympathy. He is himself aware of his weakness in asking for a woman's mercy. He becomes the victim of mental derangement; a man of iron nerves would never have gone mad to get a woman's love. If a woman can survive a lover's infidelity and failure in marriage, then man certainly could have done so had he been man enough.

What amounts to a sort of 'natural' feminine frailty in Bathsheba—her willingness to surrender her personal power as a genuine pathology in Boldwood, an indication of total personality disintegration and finally of insanity. Boldwood's shame and self-shame are more acute and more intolerable, we realize, because they are gendered: while Bathsheba bemoans the loss of her strength('the independent and spirited Bathsheba is come to this'), Boldwood bemoans the loss of something far more crucial, namely his male identity...Boldwood finds himself –incongruously, inappropriately, unnaturally—in the feminine position of submission, in which he has lost all his power to a woman. Madness and death, apparently, are the predictable outcomes of such a fall (J.Mitchell 172).

The overdeveloped anima or pronounced female voice leads to abnormal behavior and actions in men. Hardy attributes certain emotional frailties generally associated with feminine psyche to those male characters who blindly pursue social prestige. Some of them 'are also explicitly feminized—in physical description and in terms of certain impulsiveness that Hardy often uses to align the feminine with inconstant behaviour' (Kucich 235).

In anticipation of the Jungian concept of over developed animus, Hardy presents Sue as one in whom the female voice is repressed. The lack of equilibrium between the male and female voice is the root cause of her neurotic behavior. She is described as a sexless creature who is insensitive to all fine feelings. While walking along with Jude, she seems to be his split self—his other half. Jude gets upset to see her unconsciousness of gender when she tells him that while at Christminster, at the age of eighteen, she had developed an intimate relationship with a guy younger than her and the two would go out together on walking tours as if 'like two men almost'. She tells Jude plainly that she is not scared of men.

I have no fear of men, as such, nor of their looks. I have mixed with them—one or two of them particularly—almost as one of their own sex. I mean I have not felt about them as most women are taught to feel—to be on their guard against attacks on their virtue; ... (Jude 167).

Hardy presents the androgynous portrayal of Sue in the two episodes. In the first one, Jude gets alarmed at the story of the undergraduate fearing that he might be the next victim of Sue's heartlessness. That undergraduate dies after spending quite some time with Sue in London where she does live with him, but not as his mistress. She can manage to be close and distant simultaneously.

In the second episode Sue runs away from Training school and takes refuge in Jude's chamber where she puts on Jude's clothes. Her clothes get wet because she wades through the biggest river in the county after jumping from dormitory's window: 'The scene in *Jude* is perceived however as having something of the unnatural about it in its deliberate reference to the 'sexless' underclothes and its focus on the alarmingly androgynous figure of Sue, so like Fawley' (Ingham 162). Sue has no inhibitions drying up her clothes by hanging them in front of Jude: 'I suppose, Jude, it is odd that you should see me like this and all my things hanging there? Yet what nonsense! They are only a woman's clothes-sexless clothes and linen' (Jude 165).

Sue can 'do things that only boys do, as a rule. I've seen her hit in and steer down the long slide on yonder pond, with her little curls blowing, one of a file of twenty...All boys except herself; and then they'd cheer her. Sue's spirit of defiance would sometimes lead her to walk 'into the pond with her shoes and stockings off, and her petticoats pulled above her knees', saucily crying out: 'Move on, aunty! This is no sight for modest eyes! (Dutta 159-160).

Hardy's effort at depicting the mannish side of Sue's personality is a clear sign of his being deeply influenced by Jungian concepts. He has been criticized for presenting this 'half-man' picture of Sue by referring to her 'sexless' underclothes (Ingham 163). When Jude leaves Sue sleeping comfortably in the chair in his coat—'warm as a new bun and boyish as a Ganymedes'⁷, he perceives her cold nature and goes downstairs. How desperately he wants 'to get over the sense of her sex, as she seemed to be able to do so easily of his, what a comrade she would make; ...'(Jude 173).

Her female spirit did not wed with the male spirit: she could not prophesy. Her spirit submitted to the male spirit, owned the

priority of the male spirit, wished to become the male spirit.
That which was female in her, resistant, gave her only her
critical faculty (Lawrence 71-76).

It is the passion of jealousy alone that can arouse the repressed female in Sue, and Arabella serves the purpose well. Jude and Sue complement each other by filling in the deficiency that each of them contains. According to Lawrence, the repressed female voice in her has the capability to stir repressed male voice in Jude; consequently, both desire each other physically. It is the same 'atrophied female' that makes her vulnerable to make 'the fatal mistake'. She contained always the rarest, most deadly anarchy in her own being' (71-72).

Hardy's way of presenting solitary figures, in melancholic states of mind, is a clue for the reader to view them as the by-products of modern conditions of life. Among them stand exceptional women whose tormented sense of selfhood relates them with modern women. Eustacia's nocturnal habits, alienation, loitering in the dark qualify her for Persephone⁸ who is known for emptiness, infertility, shallowness and witchcraft etc. Persephone, Eustacia's mythic archetype, is sometimes called 'the Queen of Witches' (Stave 55). Rebellious Eustacia seeks adventures to subdue her sense of being a woman suffering from an oppressive melancholia. Mumming episode at Mrs. Yeobright's can be interpreted as Eustacia's unconscious wish to change her sex even for a while; she wants to be acknowledged as male. Her purpose, apparently, is to see Clym Yeobright, who returns from Paris after establishing himself as a professional gentleman. She plays the role of a Turkish Knight for which she asks Charley, one of the mummer boys, to lend her his costume and accessories to look like one. When she puts on the attire demanded of her role

as a Turkish Knight, mummers are astonished. She reveals 'herself to be changed in sex' (RN 152). Leonard W. Dean interprets Eustacia's earlier dream of dancing with a helmeted knight and diving into a pool as reflective of her unconscious wishes. 'In doing so, she seems both to take the role of the helmeted knight of the dream, and to undergo a ritual death at the hands of another helmeted knight, St. George. Eustacia has two purposes in becoming a mummer—one recognized and the other buried'. On the one hand, she hopes to find 'the knight of her dream'; on the other hand 'In the mumming scene Eustacia also reveals a second desire, a more destructive one, of which she is not conscious.' She 'assumes the heroic masculine role to which she is always aspiring. She wants to alter her essential human condition, to change her sex. A dissatisfaction so thorough-going amounts to a denial of life itself' (Deen 123-124).

Hardy's philosophy of reducing every human effort to nothing and discovering inherent futility in the very essence of existence reminds one of post-modern existentialist philosophy which focuses on nothingness. Despite all the efforts to discover the illusionary self, one is disillusioned to discover that there is nothing to be discovered.

Hardy builds into *Tess*, especially, and other works, the concept, even closer to twentieth-century existentialism, that the world is actually created by the individual vision....Upon her sensations the whole world depended to Tess; through her existence all her fellow-creatures existed, to her. The universe itself only came into being for Tess on the particular day in the particular year in which she was born (qtd in Robinson 145).

Like Cytherea, Tess knows that she is just a passing thought to the world around. Everything about her has significance with reference to her own

precious existence. The world will cease to exist for her, if she is no more a part of it. It is her own sweet self which lends meaning even to inanimate objects.

She might have seen that what had bowed her head so profoundly –the thought of the world’s concern at her situation –was founded on an illusion. She was not an existence, an experience, a passion, a structure of sensations, to anybody but herself. To all humankind besides Tess was only a passing thought. Even to friends she was no more than a frequently passing thought (ToD 107).

Moments of exaltation or drudgery of life are not eternal but transitory. Nothing is worth remembering as time settles the dust of glory or defame. Tess is capable of embracing death in the same way as her bright nature transmutes floating pollens into notes of music when Angel plays tunes on a harp in the garden. In her ecstatic frenzy, Tess undulates on the symphony of music as its notes pass through her. This is not a strange phenomenon for the one who transmutes sensuous experiences into moments of exaltation. When Angel Clare persuades his mother to accept Tess as her daughter-in-law, he pays the highest tribute to her beauty: She is ‘brim full of poetry—actualized poetry, if I may use the expression. She lives in what paper-poets only write...’ (ToD 193). Even a man like Angel Clare knows her worth: She is ‘no insignificant creature to toy with and dismiss but a woman living her precious life—a life which, to herself who endured or enjoyed it, possessed as great a dimension as the life of the mightiest to himself’(ToD 182).

Furthermore, the discovery of futility and nothingness of life at the end of the day is another feature, which Hardy shares with existentialists’ philosophy of life, though, according to some critics, Hardy’s outlook of life is pessimistic

unlike them. In utter desolation and distress, his characters in general and women in particular seem to reiterate that 'Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player...it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'⁹. They seem to pass through turbulent psychological stages: first, a state of denial; second, posing a question against destiny, why me? —The chosen one; and the final stage of sad acceptance either in death or in stoic resignation. In the first stage, there is a strong sense of denial by revolt and retaliation; the second stage posits a question—why am I the victim? Why not others? It is a state of fiery outburst of wrath at the injustice of being treated unfairly by society and by some unknown malicious power. Hardy puts rhetorical questions himself in "The Chase" after Tess's seduction: 'Why it was that upon this beautiful feminine tissue, sensitive as gossamer, and practically blank as snow as yet, there should have been traced such a course pattern as it was doomed to receive; why so often the coarse appropriates the finer thus, the wrong man the woman, the wrong woman the man, many thousand years of analytical philosophy have failed to explain to our sense of order' (ToD 86). This viewpoint of Hardy is further substantiated by women working in the field when Tess feeds her baby. Before Tess could raise a question against the injustice of society, which brands her as an adulteress and leads her to become forever the bearer of the scarlet letter—a stigma of shame and defame—one of the field workers trumpets her view "Well, a little more, or a little less, 'twas a thousand pities that it should have been happened to she, of all others. But 'tis always the comeliest! The plain ones be as safe as churches—hey, Jenny?' The speaker turned to one of the group who certainly was not ill-defined as plain" (ToD 107). The third stage is a state of

composure by yielding to circumstances. The tranquility with which Tess disposes herself off to the custody of policemen at Stonehenge by saying 'I am ready' (ToD 461) is a testimony of an absolute composure after her turbulent existence. Hardy stages grand finale of Tess and concludes it by simply leaving Angel Clare and Liza-Lu as survivors to complete the pattern of life. Life is worth living only if Tess is a precious part of it. Her zest for life and her sorrow makes all the difference; the rest is bleak darkness and incomprehensible confusion and chaos. When that right to exist is taken away, Tess ceases to exist.

Eustacia and Sue repeat the same pattern of existence in their revolt and ultimate resignation. In utter desolation and revolt, Eustacia has 'cogent reasons for asking the Supreme Power by what right a being of such exquisite finish had been placed in circumstances calculated to make of her charms a curse rather than a blessing'(RN 309). The pleasant expression of her 'carved mouth' after her death—as if 'eternal rigidity had seized upon it in a momentary transition between fervour and resignation' (RN 452)—demonstrates her readiness to accept what is in store for her. Acceptance does not mean surrendering to social pressures; rather it is the acceptance of the ultimate doom. 'Eustacia Vye is typical of all Hardy's tragic victims in finding it impossible to harmonize the outer world (both social and physical) with her inner world of feeling, and in dissipating her life in the struggle'(Deen 130).

Hardy not only resembles twentieth century existentialists in laying emphasis on human existence as a precious phenomenon, but also subscribes to their philosophy of nothingness beneath all great efforts. Why do we strive when

there is nothing to be achieved? Why do we try to discover the truth when there is no truth to be discovered? What is the end of all we desire and hope for? The only reality that we come across after our perpetual toil of day and night is 'futility and nothingness' at the bottom of existence. Whereas Hardy aligns himself with existentialists in laying emphasis on individual and considering human existence as of paramount interest, he deviates from them in a sense that his is all pessimistic approach regarding human destiny. If existentialists find light at the other end of the tunnel and perceive some sort of grandeur and sublimity in human effort against his predetermined destiny—no matter how futile and unproductive it is; Hardy enacts the drama of human suffering in such a way that happiness becomes but an 'occasional episode' or an interlude in the life long imprisonment.

To conclude, whereas Hardy seems to be the precursor of twentieth century literary thoughts and psychological theories, his women show glimpses of modern women. Though clad in the Victorian conventions, they have 'modern nerves with primitive feelings'(WL 306); they are struck by the 'disease of feeling'(Robinson 133) as well as thought—a malady difficult to be cured. Hardy's modernist concerns include 'his intense preoccupation with the divided self but that preoccupation is increasingly apprehended as something rooted within the individual, and much less in 'the probable fate', 'the sport for Heaven'(Gregor 162).

Notes

¹ 'Destabilizing subjectivity' is a phrase used by John Kucich in 'Moral Authority in the Late Novels' while alluding to Hardy's ambivalence about the unity or stability of the self. Elusiveness of self is a postmodernist thought because postmodernists believe in the fluidity and multiplicity of self and does not consider it as a static entity.

Margaret R. Higonnet. ed. *The Sense of Sex: Feminists Perspectives on Hardy*. (Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1993) p.222

² Margaret R. Higonnet. ed. *The Sense of Sex: Feminist Perspectives on Hardy*. For detail consult Dianne Fallon Sadoff's essay 'Looking at Tess' p.149-169

³ From John Bayley's introduction to *The Return of the Native*. p.xviii (listed)

⁴ Lacan formulated Gaze theory in his *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* and the role it plays in the constitution of subjectivity. The concept, thus, got its currency in film and cinema for the depiction of male voyeurism that projects his fantasy upon the female figure on the screen. For further detail see p.137-139 in Jeremy Hawthorne's *A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory* (2000)

⁵ The term 'archetypes' has been used by Carl Jung in *Conversations With Carl Jung and Reactions from Ernest Jones* by Richard I. Evans in order to refer to a certain pattern of behaviour in a society. Archetypes are unconscious instincts or images that we inherit from collective unconscious e.g fear of the unknown or darkness, serpent, wise old man, pronounced male voice (Animus) or female voice (Anima), big brother instinct, black mother etc. For detail see p.47-48

⁶ Animus is an archetype which exists in the unconscious. It is a male voice in a female. When it is not balanced by a conscious complex, it becomes pronounced in her behaviour. Similarly, anima is a female voice in male and characterizes his behaviour if it is overdeveloped. Both voices exist in an individual in equilibrium but, at times, one of them becomes more pronounced due to which he starts behaving in a particular manner.

⁷ Beautiful boy carried off by Zeus to be his cup-bearer. *Jude the Obscure*. p.174 (listed)

⁸ Persephone is an archetype of the Great Goddess who is associated with death, sterility, loneliness and despair. Shirley A. Stave in *The Decline of the Goddess: Nature, Culture and Women in Thomas Hardy's Fiction* associates Eustacia and Bathsheba with mythic figures for sharing certain attributes with them. For detail see p.49-50

⁹ Oft quoted lines from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Act V, Scene v, Lines 24-28. (listed)

Chapter IX

Conclusion

The undertaken task as per thesis statement in the Introduction was to prove Hardy's heroines to be the forerunners of modern women not only in their emotional constitution but also in their primitive instincts. By investing them with new dimensions in the light of twentieth century modernism, their re-evaluation has been done to qualify them to be called the precursors of modern women. They have been shown revolting, independent, sensual, self-willed, and energetic—the embodiment of death and destruction. They have been explored and understood as a vital link between the traditional and the modern concept of woman. They are taken as humans with frailties rather than embodiments of ideal womanhood. Furthermore, modernism has been redefined to highlight the modernistic tendencies in Hardy's female protagonists. Many critics have touched upon them, without considering their exclusively modern traits.

After Introduction and Literature Review, the text opened with Chapter III entitled “The Changing Concept of 'Self ' in Psychoanalytic and Literary Perspective”. Here the term ‘modernism’ has been redefined in a broader sense according to the requirement of the thesis. The particular emphasis on the concept of self in the light of Freudian and Lacanian interpretations of literary texts relates it to modernism; hence proving it to be a modernistic tendency. A brief overview of different literary texts has been made to show the relevance and special significance of psychoanalytic theories in

scrutinizing classical as well as modern literary texts. Furthermore, the discussion has marked the transitional stages in the evolution of the concept of self. The works of the literary giants—from the Renaissance to 20th century—have been taken into consideration to reflect their preoccupation with the question of self and identity which is the hallmark of the 20th century literature. The question is forcefully addressed in the feministic writings of Alice James, Emily Dickinson and Virginia Woolf whose works unveil the discomfort and nervous disorders suffered by women due to the suppression of their vital selves. This discussion provides a viable foundation for comprehending the real, vital self of Hardy's female protagonists.

In Chapter IV, the dominant Victorian attitudes have been examined regarding the woman's position in the society. An attempt has been made to highlight 'separate sphere' theory for man and woman in order to show the limitations that were put on woman's talents. The limited opportunities and occupations have been pinpointed to reflect their peripheral status. The poems written with distinct intention of specifying those territories have been discussed, particularly Coventry Patmore's verse sequence 'Angel in the House' and Ruskin's 'Of Queen's Gardens'. Women's place and image in the Victorian culture has been examined—the image that testifies to their marginalized and subordinated position. Moreover, certain features of the New Woman have been taken into account in order to distinguish her from traditional or modern woman. The purpose of the detailed account of woman's submerged identity as someone's mother, wife, sister and daughter was to prepare ground for

further discussion of Hardy's heroines in the subsequent Chapter Five entitled 'Seductive Eves: Image of Woman in Hardy's Fiction.'

In Chapter V, Hardy's women have been examined with a clear intention of showing their idiosyncrasies in contrast to typical Victorian women. They do not appear to be drawn either in black or white, or, as per typical Victorian dichotomy of Virgin Mary/ Madonna. Accordingly, three distinct types of women have been traced in his major novels. They have been grouped according to certain reflective traits of personalities. Tess, Sue, Bathsheba and Eustacia have been found to be complex and rebellious; Elizabeth-Jane, Thomasin, Marty South, Liza-Lu are without intricacies and last, but not the least, Miss Aldclyffe, Mrs Charmond, Lucetta assume the roles of the society's femme fatale.

Chapter VI, entitled "Instinctual Versus Ethical Selves in Hardy's Female Protagonists" is the most focal part of the discussion. From this critical juncture proceeds the actual analysis of Hardy's heroines. Linking back the discussion to Chapter III, it has highlighted the reasons that are responsible for the splinter between their social and instinctual selves—the conflict between I (social construct) and instinctual drives. The attempted cross-examination of their psychological make-up reveals their unrelenting struggle to establish autonomy in sexual terms against their ethical preoccupations. In order to make it convenient to understand the conflict, a pair of women in each novel under discussion has been chosen to represent the social v/s instinctual self with the exception of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Here Tess is not the only character who embodies the conflict; rather two male characters (Angel and

Alec) also come to represent that conflict between ethical and instinctual self in their person. Sue and Arabella, Eustacia and Thomasin, Grace and Marty South, Elizabeth-Jane and Lucetta have been contrasted with each other. Moreover, some of them—Tess, Sue, Eustacia and Grace—have been presented as embodiment of additional conflicts within their own persons which complicate their existence, whereas others—Mrs Charmond, Arabella and Lucetta—are instincts incarnate.

In Chapter VII entitled as “Quest for Self in Hardy's Female Protagonists”, the findings of the previous chapter have been further elaborated in support of the thesis statement. In Chapter Six, the focus was on the ethical and sexual aspects of Hardy's heroines, while in this chapter it has been attempted to trace their quest for self, in other words their quest after something unattainable. The contribution of patriarchy has been analyzed and assumed to be the root cause of obstructing their course towards self-fulfillment by imposing upon them preconceived notions of identity. Their resistance to be pinned down to the identity prefigured for them by the society has been highlighted, and is shown to have found expression in their tremendous revolt against social institutions.

Chapter VIII entitled “Hardy's Affinity to Modern Writers in Depiction of Women” has furthered the contentions derived throughout the dissertation by showing Hardy's affinity with modern authors and psychologists in the way he conceives and projects the image of females in focus. Besides, certain other tendencies have been perceived in Hardy's heroines that came to be recognized as modern in a broader sense of the term with evidences from the

texts of his major novels. The impact of Hardy's imagery and art of characterization has been discerned on D. H. Lawrence who owes him a great deal. The vital significance of tracing modern aspects in relation to understanding the portrayal of Hardy's female characters has been thoroughly explored and duly elaborated. It has been attempted to capture, understand and appreciate the true spirit of Hardy's art emphasizing its transitional place in literary heritage by considering his characters in general, and women in particular, as ahead of their time.

The modern analysis of Hardy's women leads us to appreciate Hardy's contribution to the evolution of modern woman. It not only enables us to trace their modernistic tendencies but to probe into the hidden and repressed elements of their psyche. It has the potential to open a new vista of avenues from which they can be approached in order to discover vast possibilities of deeper exploration. His women should not be judged by the standards of the age in which they breathe; rather they can be regarded as essentially more complex and challenging than they appear when judged in the contextual frame of their age.

Human beings are too intricate to be understood from how they appear to be. Appearances are often deceptive so they should not be judged by our personal standards or by established social parameters. Psychoanalyzing Hardy's heroines may help us to probe into the deeper layers of consciousness of these complex individuals and enable us to read between the lines. Future researchers may also expand the scope of Hardy's art by including female characters of his short stories and poetry.

Here it looks appropriate to point out certain limitations so that the range of this discussion is clearly understood. Hardy's poetry, short stories and *The Dynasts* have been excluded from the discussion. Similarly, the discussion has concentrated on Hardy's major tragic novels at the cost of minimal coverage to the female protagonists in minor or less popular ones. It should not, however, lead the reader to infer that they are utterly void of the traits on which the discussion is founded. Their otherwise due coverage has not been afforded here as the prime concern was to focus on the traits in question rather than to have comprehensive analysis of interesting characters.

WORKS CITED

- Abercrombie, Lascelles. Thomas Hardy: A Critical Study. London: Martin Secker Ltd, 1935.
- Alvarez, A. "Jude the Obscure". Hardy: A Collection of Critical Essays. Ed. Albert J. Guerard. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Inc., 1963. 113-122.
- Aquiar, Sarah Appleton. "The Male Perspective." The Bitch is Back: Wicked Women in Literature. Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2001. 34-46. The Questia Online Library. 6 March. 2008.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=105127616>>
- Ardis, Ann L. "Erotomania". New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990.
- Ayres, Brenda. Dissenting Women in Dickens' Novels: The Subversion of Domestic Ideology. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998. The Questia online Library. 16 May. 2008
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=25597958>>
- Bassein, Beth Ann. "Adultery and Death". Women and Death: Linkages in Western Thought and Literature. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984. 101-113.
- Battan, Jesse F. "You Cannot Fix the Scarlet Letter on My Breast!: Women Reading, Writing, and Reshaping the Sexual culture of Victorian America." Journal of Social History 37. 3 (2004): 601. The Questia Online Library. 27 Feb. 2011.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=5006500929>>

- Bayley, John. An Essay on Hardy. London: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- Benjamin, Marina. Ed. A Question of Identity: Women, Science and Literature. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993.
- Blanchard, Mary W. "It is surprising that there are Any Happy Wives: The Art Interchange." Journal of Women History 8.3 (1996): 36-65.
- Boumelha, Penny. Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form. Harvester Press Ltd, 1982.
- Brady, Kristin. "Thomas Hardy and Matters of Gender." The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy. Ed. Dale Kramer. London: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 93-111.
- Brady, Kristin. "Textual Hysteria: Hardy's Narrator on Women". The Sense of Sex: Feminist Perspectives on Hardy. Ed. Margaret R. Higgonet. Urbana & Chicago: Illinois Press, 1993. 87-106.
- Calder, Jenni. Women and Marriage in Victorian Fiction. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Cantor, Norman F. Twentieth Century Culture: Modernism to Deconstruction. Peter Lang: New York, 1988. The Questia Online Library. 20 April. 2010 . <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=21033116>>
- Casagrande, Peter J. "Now it Remains: Hardy and D. H. Lawrence". Hardy's Influence on the Modern Novel. Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, 1987. 32-61.
- Casey, Ellen Miller. "Edging Women Out?: Reviews of Women Novelists in the Athenaeum, 1860-1900." Victorian Studies 39. 2 (1996): 151-172.

The Questia Online Library. 5 Feb. 2011.

<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=96448368>>

Chew, Samuel C. Thomas Hardy, Poet and Novelist. New York: A. A. Knopf, 1928.

Clark, Marjorie Levine. "Engendering Relief: Women, Able-bodiedness and the New Poor Law in Early Victorian England." Journal of Women's History 11. 4 (2000): 107-130.

Christinat, Emily Rose. "Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* and D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*: A Psychological Transition from Victorianism to Modernism". Thesis. Wichita State University, 2002.

Cunningham, Gail. The New Woman and the Victorian Novel. London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1978.

Curtis, Simon. "Hardy, George Moore and the 'Doll' of English Fiction". Celebrating Thomas Hardy: Insights and Appreciations. Ed. Charles P.C Pettit. London: Macmillan, 1996.

Dean, Carolyn J. "Psychoanalysis and the Self." The Self and Its Pleasures: Bataille, Lacan and the History of the Decentered Subject. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992.

Deen, Leonard W. "Heroism and Pathos in *The Return of the Native*". Thomas Hardy: The Tragic Novels. Ed. R.P. Draper. London: Macmillan, 1975. 119-132.

Deresiewicz, William. "Thomas Hardy and the History of Friendship Between the Sexes ." Wordsworth Circle 38. 1-2 (2007): 56. The Questia Online Library. 28 Feb. 2011.

<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=5022713207>>

Duffin, H. C. Thomas Hardy: A Study of the Wessex Novels, the Poems and The Dynasts. Manchester: The University Press, 1937.

Durden, Mark. "Ritual and Deception: Photography and Thomas Hardy ." Journal of European Studies 30. 1 (2000): 57. The Questia Online Library. 21 March 2011.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=5002360227>>

Dutta, Shanta. Ambivalence in Hardy: A Study of His Attitude to Women. London: Anthem Press, 2010.

Dyhouse, Carol. "The role of women: from self-sacrifice to self-awareness". The Victorians. Ed. Laurence Lerner. London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1978.

Eglin, John. "The Making of the Modern self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England." Journal of Social History 40.4 (2007): 1015. The Questia Online Library. 17 Nov. 2008.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=5021809998>>

Ellis, Havelock. "Westminster Rev. of 'Thomas Hardy's Novels' (April 1883)." Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage. Ed. R.G. Cox. London: Routledge, 1979. 103-132.

Evans, Richard I. Conversations with Carl Jung and Reactions from Ernest Jones. Princeton NJ: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1964.

Garlick, Barbara. "Radical Hens and Vociferous Ladies: Representation and Class in the Mid-Nineteenth Century." Stereotypes of Women in Power: Historical Perspectives and Revisionist Views. Ed. Suzanne Dixon, Barbara Garlick and Pauline Allen. New York: Greenwood Press, 1992. 157-180. The Questia Online Library. 23 Aug. 2010.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=27426274>>

- Gergen, Kenneth J. "Romanticism and The Reality of the Deep Interior." The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life. New York: Basic Books, 2000. 20-27.
- Gibson, James. "Hardy and His Readers." Thomas Hardy: The Writer and His Background. Ed. Norman Page. London: Bell & Hyman, 1980. 192-218.
- Gilooley, Eileen. "Feminist Criticism and the Nineteenth-Century Novel." A Companion to the Victorian Novel. Ed. William Baker and Kenneth Womack. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002. 391-402. The Questia Online Library. 15 Oct. 2007.
<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=101663820>
- Giordano Jr., Frank R. I'd Have My Life Unbe: Thomas Hardy's Self-Destructive Characters. University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1984.
- Gounelas, Ruth Parkin. Literature and Psychoanalysis. New York : Palgrave, 2001.
- Greene, Graham. The End of the Affair. London: Heineman Ltd, 1951.
- Gregor, Ian. The Great Web: The Form of Hardy's Major Fiction. London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 1974.
- Gutierrez, Donald. "Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*: The Self in Tragic Love". The Dark and the Light Gods: Essays on the Self in Modern Literature. Troy, NY: Whitston, 1987. 27-45.

Hannigan, D. F. "Westminster Review (1896) of Thomas Hardy's Novels."

Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage. Ed. R.G.Cox. London:

Routledge, 1979. 270-274.

Hardy, Thomas. A Pair of Blue Eyes. London: Macmillan Ltd, 1902.

—. Desperate Remedies. London: Macmillan Ltd , 1975.

—. Far from the Madding Crowd. London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1963.

—. Jude the Obscure. London: Macmillan Ltd, 1974.

—. Tess of the D'Urbervilles. London: David Campbell Publishers Ltd, 1991.

—. The Return of the Native. London: David Campbell Publishers Ltd, 1992.

—. The Woodlanders. London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1964.

Harvey, Geoffrey. The Complete Guide to Thomas Hardy. New York:

Routledge, 2003. The Questia Online Library. 16 Feb. 2007.

<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=104252060>>

Hattie, John. Self-Concept. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1992.

Hegel, G.W.F. Phenomenology of Spirit. Trans. A.V. Miller. New York:

Oxford, 1979.

Hyman, Virginia R. Ethical Perspective in the Novels of Thomas Hardy.

London: Kennikat Press Corp.,1975.

Ingham, Patricia. Intro. Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy. London:

David Campbell Publishers, 1991.

—. The Language of Gender and Class: Transformations in the Victorian Novel. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Jacobus, Mary. Reading Woman: Essays in Feminist Criticism. New York:

Columbia University Press, 1986.

- Jekel, Pamela L. Thomas Hardy's Heroines: A Chorus of Priorities. Troy, NY: Whitson Publishing, 1986.
- Johnson, Lionel. "Characters of Men and Women". The Art of Thomas Hardy. London: The Bodley Head Ltd, 1923.
- Knelman, Judith. "Women Murderers in Victorian Britain ." History Today August 1988: 9. The Questia Online Library. 5 Feb. 2011.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=5001362327>>
- Kucich, John. "Moral Authority in the Late Novels: The Gendering of Art". The Sense of Sex: Feminist Perspectives on Hardy. Ed. Margaret R. Higgonet. Urbana & Chicago: Illinois Press, 1993. 221-241.
- Kramer, Dale. "Hardy and Readers: *Jude the Obscure*". The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy. Ed. Dale Kramer. U.K: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 164-182
- Lamonic, Drew. "Wuthering Heights: The Boundless Passion of Catherine Earnshaw". We are Three Sisters: Self and Family in the Writing of the Brontës. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2003. 95-117.
- Langland, Elizabeth. "Becoming a Man in Jude the Obscure." The Sense of Sex: Feminist Perspectives on Hardy. Ed. Margaret R. Higgonet. Urbana & Chicago: Illinois Press, 1993. 32-48.
- . "Society and Self in George Eliot, Hardy, and Lawrence". Society in the Novel. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.
- . Nobody's Angels: Middle Class Women and Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Lawrence, D. H. " Study of Thomas Hardy". Selected Critical Writings. Ed. Michael Herbert. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. 9-74.

—. “Study of Thomas Hardy”. Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence. Ed. Edward D. McDonald. London: Heinemann, 1936.

—. “Sue Bridehead”. Hardy: A Collection of Critical Essays. Ed. Albert J. Guerard. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Inc., 1963. 71-76.

—. The Rainbow. Ed. Lionel Kelly. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd, 1995.

Lloyd, Jennifer M. “Conflicting Expectations in Nineteenth Century British Matrimony: The Failed Companionate Marriage of Effie Gray and John Ruskin .” Journal of Women's History 11. 2 (1999): 86 . The Questia Online Library. 16 Jan. 2010.

<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=98495895>>

Mahood, Linda. “Family Ties: Lady Child Savers and Girls of the Street 1850-1925.” Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945. Ed. Esther Breitenbach and Eleanor Gordon. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1992. 42-64.

Malton, Sara A. “The Woman Shall Bear Her Iniquity”: (1) Death as Social Discipline in Hardy's *The Return of the Native* .” Studies in the Novel 32. 2 (2000): 147. The Questia Online Library. 15 Nov. 2008

< <http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=5001768199>>

Mansfield, Nick. Subjectivity: Theories of the Self from Freud to Haraway. St. Leonards, N.S.W: Allen and Unwin, 2000.

- Mitchell, Judith. "Thomas Hardy" The Stone and the Scorpion: The Female Subject of Desire in the Novels of Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994. 155-220.
- Mitchell, Sally. Daily Life in Victorian England. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996.
- Moore, Lindy. "Domestic Training Versus Intellectual Discipline." Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945. Ed. Esther Breitenbach and Eleanor Gordon. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1992.
- Morgan, Rosemarie. Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy. London: Routledge, 1988.
- Modell, Arnold H. The Private Self. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Mullan, John. "Feelings and Novels." Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present. Ed. Roy Potter. London: Routledge, 1997. 119-131.
- Mumm, Susan. "Men in Victorian Britain ." Journal of Social History 29.3 (1996): 527.
- Murphy, Patricia. "Fated Marginalization: Women and Science in the Poetry of Constance Naden." Victorian Poetry 40. 2 (2002): 107.
- Neff, Wanda Fraiken. Victorian Working Women: An Historical and Literary Study of Women in British Industries and Professions, 1832-1850. New York: Columbia University Press, 1929.

- Neill, Edward. "Thomas Hardy." A Companion to the Victorian Novel . Ed. William Baker and Kenneth Womack. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002. 307-318. The Questia Online Library. 23 April 2010.
<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=101663820>
- Oliphant, Margaret. "'The Anti-Marriage League', Blackwood Magazine's Review (1896)" Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage. Ed. R. G. Cox. London: Routledge, 1979.
- Page, Norman. Thomas Hardy: The Novels. New York: Palgrave, 2001.
- Perkin, Joan. Women and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England. London: Routledge, 1989.
- Piehler, Liana F. Spatial Dynamics and Female development in Victorian Art and Novels: Creating a Woman's Space. New York: Peter Lang, 2003.
- Praz, Mario. The Hero in Eclipse in Victorian Fiction. Trans. Angus Davidson. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1956.
- Reynolds, K.D. Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1998.
- Robinson, Marsha S. "Shakespeare's Hamlet and the Controversies of Self." Renaissance Quarterly 56. 1 (2003): 242 .
- Robinson, Roger. " Hardy and Darwin". Thomas Hardy: The Writer and His Background. Ed. Norman Page. London: Bell & Hyman Ltd , 1980. 128-150.

- Roy, Paula Alida. "Agent or Victim: Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891)." Women in Literature: Reading through the Lens of Gender. Ed. Jerilyn Fisher and Ellen S. Silber. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003.
- Sadoff, Dianne Fallon. "Looking at Tess: The Female Figure in Two Narrative Media". The Sense of Sex: Feminist Perspectives on Hardy. Ed. Margaret R. Higgonet. Urbana & Chicago, 1993. 149-171.
- Sawday, Jonathan. Rewriting the Self: Histories From the Renaissance to the Present. Ed. Roy Porter. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Shakespeare, William. The Complete Works. Ed. Peter Alexander. London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1951.
- Shires, Linda M. "Narrative, Gender and Power in *Far From the Madding Crowd*". The Sense of Sex. Feminist Perspectives on Hardy. Ed. Margaret R. Higgonet. Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993. 49-65.
- . "The Radical Aesthetic of the *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*." The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy. Ed. Dale Kramer. UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 145-163.
- Stave, Shirley A. The Decline of the Goddess: Nature, Culture and Women in Thomas Hardy's Fiction. Westport, CT: Greenwood press, 1995.
- Stein, Atara. "'She Moves in Mysterious Ways' The Byronic Heroine." The Byronic Hero in Film, Fiction and Television. Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004. 170-212.

- Steffoff, Rebecca. Charles Darwin and the Evolution Revolution. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Synnott, Anthony. The Body Social: Symbolism, Self and Society. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Tanner, Tony. "Colour and Movement in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*." Thomas Hardy: The Tragic Novels. Ed. R. P. Draper. London: Macmillan Ltd, 1975.182-208.
- Templeton, Wayne. States of Estrangement: The Novels of D.H. Lawrence, 1912-1917. Troy NY: Whitston Publishing, 1989.
- Walker, Nancy. "'Wider Than the Sky' Public Presence and Private Self in Dickinson, James, and Woolf." The Private self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings. Ed. Shari Benstock. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Williams, Linda Ruth. Critical Desire: Psychoanalysis and the Literary Subject. UK: Edward Arnold, 1995.
- Woolf, Virginia. Night and Day. London: Vintage, 2000.
- Woolf, Virginia. To the Lighthouse. London: Aldine House, 1962.
- Wordsworth, William. The Prelude: Or Growth of a Poet's Mind. Ed. Ernest De Selincourt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926.
- Wright, Edward. "'The Novels of Thomas Hardy', Quarterly Review 1904." Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage. Ed. R.G. Cox. London: Routledge, 1979. 345-365.