

## Psycho-sexual Ambivalence in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*: A Freudian Interpretation

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### **Abstract:**

*Human existence is subject to intrinsic instinctive thingamajig, socio-cultural norms and interpersonal relativity. Human personality remains in a conflicting relationship with these variables which shape human lot in this indifferent human and natural cosmos. Hardy's Tess of the d'Urbervilles (subsequently referred to as T.D.) offers a cycloramic view of various conflicts resulting from psychosexual drives and cultural values. These conflicts allude to psychic turmoil which the characters of Hardy's fictional world undergo to manifest the failure of man-made system. Hardy brings to light the psychic ambivalence in the representation of sexuality as a cultural taboo and intellectual idealization of essential human emotions. Psychologically, the psychosexual conflicts are the display of the instinctive skirmish of sexual and ego instincts. This paper analyses Hardy's representation of these conflicts in the light of Sigmund Freud's theories of sexuality and vicissitudes of ego and sexual instincts. This paper foregrounds that conflicts between the claims of sexuality and the ego instincts goad psychic ambivalence and conceive tragic downfall.*

**Keywords:** Psychic ambivalence; sexual and ego instincts; id; ego; super-ego; taboo; intellectual idealism; inhibitions.

### **I. Introduction**

Hardy<sup>1</sup> points out the role of cultural values in human suffering by illustrating the conflicts between instinctive as well as intellectual aspirations and diverse cultural taboos in *T.D.* The sublimity of human life lies in emotional, intellectual, and cultural aspirations. However, the cultural values, which have been formulated to safeguard human existence from the social and internal conflicts, posit a clash with the emotional and intellectual desires, thus, prompting a psychic ambivalence towards the cultural values and instinctive as well as intellectual predilections. Hardy has depicted this psychic ambivalence by presenting sexuality as the subject matter of this novel, which is considered taboo in cultural terms. He has illustrated the psychological aspects of the sexual instincts which are inherent in every human being. However, human beings do not live in the state of nature. The cultural values, which educate human impulses, leave irremovable prints on an individual's ego or conscious self. The sexual instincts, which are erotic and uncontrollable in their nature, aim at the satisfaction of its stimuli; whereas

the ego instincts, which are trained under the influence of social and intellectual ideals, strive for the preservation of the subject from both external and internal dangers. In this regard, the role of the ego in human personality becomes very crucial because it lives in a continuous conflict with inner desires and moral sense. Hardy has illustrated the conflicts of ego in *T.D.* This paper offers a psychoanalytic interpretation of the conflicts between the instinctive mechanism of sexuality and ego which goad psychic ambivalence and highlights the role of cultural values in a tragic lot of the individual.

## **II. Literature Review**

Hardy's perceptions about the instinctive mechanism, the sense of guilt, the psychological turmoil due to the repression of essential human drives, and the ambivalence allude to the psychological depth which he perceived about the human psyche. It is interesting to find out that Hardy's perceptions about the human psyche find their resemblance with Freudian psychoanalytical theories related to the instinctive mechanisms, sexuality, and cultural repression. According to Gabriel (1983), Freud considered instinctive drives are the root cause of human activity and Hardy's fictional characters also highlight the role of instincts in their actions. Sexuality is an essential cultural phenomenon that plays an important role in the human psychosocial paradigm. Similarly, gender politics, economic stress, intellectual idealization, and cultural values induce different conflicts. Hardy has highlighted some of these conflicts in *T.D.* In this regard, Mallett (2004) points out that *T.D.* presents the sexual orientation of its protagonists by foregrounding their motives for sexual relationships and the position of women in these relationships. Keeping in view the Victorian ideology regarding sexual fetishes with the virginity and the legal position of male as the owner of the female body, Mallett (2004) finds that Hardy has explored the internal concerns of his characters with their identity as well as the value of their existence which were being sacrificed by the dogmatic ideology of religion and taboos. Mallett (2004) has presented the Freudian concept of sexuality which is not confined to the sexual act. Similarly, Mallett (2004) points out that one sexual incident cannot define Tess's character. She is viewed as a sexual object and Angel's rejection of her due to the loss of her virginity points out the working of social ideology which structures gender values. Exposing the internal conflicts emerging from the marriage system, sexual relations, and gender ideologies, Hardy points out the enigma of human sexual relationships which lies in cultural repression and provoked sexual manipulation which places an individual into a gender paradigm (Mallett, 2004). However, the psychosexual behaviour of Angel points out the dogmatic importance which is given to the taboos of sexuality and virginity which cause Tess's tragedy.

Similarly, Brady (1986) considers Tess's tragedy in the ambivalent presentation of her sexuality. Tess's circumstances, pride, and sexuality play an important role in her "confused surrender" to Alec, who, being a perfect manipulator, numbs her assertion and resistance for the time being and succeeds. According to Brady (1986), Tess has been seduced. However, such an outlook reduces the greatness of Tess's character. Tess's sexual misadventure can be properly understood in the mechanism of sexual instincts and the cultural presentation of sexuality which presents sexuality as a taboo. Hazen (1969) considers Tess a scapegoat whose tragedy is due to the ambivalent social attitude towards sexuality which was unnatural and harmful. Hazen (1969) also considers ancestral pride and recklessness as important aspects of Tess's downfall in this novel. In this regard, Hazen seems to focus on the less important factors in the search for Tess's tragic flaw.

Tess is the victim of social and internal forces. She is viewed through her sensuality. She gets a tragic end in the assertion of her internal being.

In this context, Wright (1989) comments that Hardy explores the delights and dangers of eroticism in *T.D.* Wright (1989) defines the erotic as a cultural product in the background of the Victorian attitude toward sexuality which characterizes the artistic representation of desire as an end. Wright (1989) points out that Hardy's protagonists, under the sway of this phantasy, yearn for the images of coherence and completeness, thus making the object of their desire contradictory to their inner needs. Wright (1989) focuses on these images particularly the way men see women. He considers Hardy's treatment of sexuality as Freudian. According to Wright (1989), women in Hardy's fiction remain an object of desire and they never gain their status as subjects. They are a split between culture and nature and civilization and instinct. Tess dies as a victim of fate, civilization, and male desire. She never becomes a subject.

According to Sumner (1981), Hardy's chief concerns as a psychological novelist are psychological inhibitions and internal sexual conflicts. These concerns make his characters modern in spirit and ideas. Sumner's (1981) analysis of Angel's character is based on his conflicts between reason and emotion and instinctive drives and intellect. These conflicting views keep him in a conflict between asceticism and sensuousness. Sumner (1981) finds many similarities between Freud and Hardy as both were interested in similar kinds of psychological issues. Angel's rejection of Tess, his idealisation, and his reaction to that rejection are some examples of these similarities. However, Sumner (1981) did not consider the role of instincts in Tess's sexual relationship with Alec and the cultural values of the taboo of virginity. Sumner (1981) considers Angel's rejection of Tess a neurotic act, however, Angel's overvaluation of Tess and the lack of sensual current in his sensuality are important factors that display the working of ego instincts.

Similarly, Hawkins (1976) has also addressed the question of intellectual idealisation of emotions in *T.D.* According to him, the central conflict in Hardy's novel is between the ideal and the real. Hawkins (1976) considers Angel's "moral daintiness and sexual hesitancy" (p. 132) as the factors responsible for Tess's tragedy. Hawkins (1976) points out that Hardy, through the working of Tess's mind, exposes the development of self-destructive and altruistic aspects of her personality. Angel's idealism and double standards point out the working of Victorian ideology on his sexual behaviour which in the end makes Tess a neurotic to commit murder. Hawkins (1976) points out that the abnormalities and complexities emerging from the interpersonal relationships are due to abnormal sexual behaviour which was the result of the conflict between individual and social phenomenon. It is apparent that the social factor undermines the course of human conduct which can be better understood by applying psychoanalytical concepts. These critics point out the psychological aspects of Tess and Angel's sexuality and cultural taboos.

This paper studies the empirical psychoanalytical view of the conflicts and compromise between ego and sexual instincts to see their impact on the human psyche. Further, the paper has included Freud's theories related to instinctive mechanisms to justify Hardy's observations which offer a relatively new insight to study this novel.

### III. Theoretical Background

Psychologically, the human psyche or personality is divided into three parts. Freud introduced this model of the human psyche to formulate a framework to understand the unconscious motivations of human conflicts and their effect on the human psyche. Green and Jill (1996) describe Freud's model of the human psyche which consists of *id*, *ego*, and *super-ego*. *Id* is the instinctive makeup of human consciousness that manifests the needs of the human body. Instinctive drives are innate and instinctive stimuli cannot suppress themselves. The *super-ego* is the opposite of the *id* and it represents cultural values, ideology, and social influences. The *ego* is an intermediary agency that pacifies the drives and creates a harmonious psychological atmosphere for the subsequent operations of *id* and *super-ego*. Freud (1961) calls *ego* a seat of anxiety as it lives in a diplomatic relationship with *id* and *super-ego*. Thus, the *id* wants that its desires and needs should be satisfied. This places pressure upon *ego* which bears on itself the imprint of what is unacceptable via the operations of the *super-ego*. In this way, the *super-ego* becomes another powerful force that puts pressure on the *ego*. This description aptly describes the working of inner and outer forces on the individual, thus, culminating in various conflicts which make an individual psychologically complex. In literary analysis, there used to be a focus on the complex pattern of conflicts, that is, how these conflicts are instigated and what forces aggravated them. The psychoanalytical criticism with its empirical terminology and concepts aptly describes this phenomenon.

Instincts and repression are two important aspects of the human psyche. These concepts of psychoanalytical theory define the impact of the external phenomenon on the internal phenomenon of an individual. Freud (1961) defines instinct as a stimulus applied to the mind and it arises from the organism itself, thus, differentiating itself from the physiological stimuli which arise from some external physical action. Freud (1961) points out that an instinct aims at satisfaction and it should always be pleasurable, and the function of the mind is to impart satisfaction to the stimuli. However, the conflict between instinctive stimuli and their innate satisfaction puts pressure on the *ego* which is manifested in external as well as internal predilections. This conflict impedes the satisfaction of internal stimuli from the external world. Freud (1961), further, divides instincts into *ego* instincts and sexual instincts and points out that in psychological complications there is to be a conflict between the claims of sexuality and *ego*. While applying psychoanalysis in literary criticism, the fictional characters are not considered as neurotic or psychological cases. Therefore, the researchers' focus is to achieve the understanding of these intricate processes which cause internal unrest by both internal and external forces. This concept of Freud is a key to understand the inner conflicts of Hardy's protagonists because his characters also swing between the claims of *ego* and sexual instincts. Freud (1961), further, describes the vicissitudes of instincts. He says that during life an instinct may undergo the following vicissitudes: repression, turnaround into its inverse, targeting the subject's self, and modification of innate expression of an instinct to a socially acceptable value. It is obvious from Freud's ideas that instinctual impulses are the very warp and woof of an individual's unconscious world which also influences his conscious world.

#### **IV. Research Methodology**

Hardy's perceptions about the instinctive mechanisms, sense of guilt, psychological disturbance, and ambivalent attitude point out the psychological depth which he perceived about the human psyche. It is interesting to note that Hardy's perceptions find their resemblance with Freudian psychoanalytical theories related to instinctive mechanisms. This paper offers a psychoanalytical interpretation of *T.D.* in the light of Freud's theories of sexuality and instinctive mechanism to signify Hardy's psychoanalytical approach and its empirical significance. The study is based upon an exhaustive analysis of *T.D.* in the light of Freud's theories of sexual and ego instincts to highlight the conflicts between cultural values and instinctive drives. The primary data has been collected from the primary text which has been analysed by the secondary data collected from Freud's work. The techniques of phenomenological research, which include open coding, contextual analysis, and close reading have been utilized to collect and analyse the data. The paper highlights the psychic ambivalence towards cultural values and instinctive drives.

#### **V. Findings and Discussion**

Sexuality and intellectual idealization of essential human emotions are cultural, psychological, and individual issues. The cultural values and instinctive stimuli often clash with each other and induce repression in the subject. Hardy's technique of characterization is of considerable significance in this novel to understand the psychic ambivalence in his central characters. Tess has been presented as a symbol of sexuality as well as a sensitive human being who becomes the victim of cultural taboos and values. Similarly, Alec and Angel represent two different attitudes towards women. Alec stands for the conventional approach where a woman is considered as a sexual object, whereas Angel represents the sublime approach where a woman is idealized as some unearthly creature. Both ignore the real person in Tess, thus ruining her physically as well as internally in their ways. Tess's physical sexuality and the response she gathers in the form of sensuality and idealization represent an emotional ambivalence towards sexuality and the idealization of love. Sexuality is instinctive, while love is cultural. Sexuality does not have any conscience while love is the sublimation of sexuality to justify the cultural criticism towards eroticism. That is why sexuality leads to a sense of guilt which also accentuates the psychical ambivalence towards instincts and values. Hardy has presented sexuality and virginity as a taboo in *T.D.* Taboo has certain psychological implications.

According to Freud (1955), the taboo is expressed in limitations and proscriptions. It has a sense of untouchability about it. Similarly, Hardy has presented the psychological picture of sexuality where the cultural values present sex as a taboo and train the individuals accordingly. In this regard, Hardy has introduced an emotional ambivalence in his protagonists to point out the conflicts regarding this taboo. Tess's relationship with Alec and Angel brings to light this ambivalence which causes destruction for all these characters. Hardy's method to study the intricate psychological processes, which initiate from a sexual act and end at the death of the two characters, brings out the psychological introspection which Freud offered in his study of taboos and the inherent conflicts between sexual instincts and cultural values. In this regard, Tess's emotional ambivalence towards Alec, her insistence to share her past life with Angel, her self-inflicted punishment due to a sense of guilt, Alec's murder, and her death highlight the psychological conflicts between the claims of sexual instincts and the ego instincts.

Alec's physical advancements and Tess's reluctant rejection and acceptance manifest the Freudian view of sex as a taboo and conflicts between sexual and ego instincts.

As Hardy has portrayed sexuality as a taboo, it is important to describe the psychological connotation of taboo. The primitive people used to believe in taboos due to their limited intellectual resources. Freud (1955) says that the main prohibition in case of a taboo is against touching which links it with sexuality. What he means by touching is, in simple words, coming into contact and this contact needs not to be physical. Even the imaginative contact also comes in the prohibition of touching. Conventionally, any kind of premarital sexual contact is prohibited, and this sexuality is presented as taboo. But as a taboo must be of a dual nature, that is, it should be sacred and unclean at the same time, therefore, it contains an ambivalent attraction. Freud (1955) describes the origin of ambivalence in the functioning of instinctive stimuli and reprimands of the super-ego. Desire is prompted by id and prohibition is channelized through the agency of super-ego to repress the demands of the instinctive id. Freud (1955) explicates that the prohibition and the instinctive stimuli persist together as the repressed cannot be abolished from the human psyche. Resultantly, a psychic fixation is created to foreground the conflict between prohibition and the instinct. Freud (1961) categorizes instincts into sexual and ego instincts. The sexual instincts are the inherent operating forces in humans, while the ego instincts are not inherent. These come into existence by the influence of cultural values, education, religion, and socioeconomic conditions of a given society. The inner mechanism of the psyche is an unending confrontation between sexual and ego instincts. So, the ambivalent attitude towards sexuality is the conflict between prohibition (which is operated by the ego instincts) and touching (which is stimulated by the sexual instincts).

Hardy described this phenomenon of touching and prohibition in the slope scene where Alec was escorting Tess in a carriage to Trantridge. During the journey, he demanded a kiss as a price to reduce the speed of the cart which Tess hesitantly allowed but she wiped the print of the kiss off her cheeks with her handkerchief. The unwilling permission and the unconscious wiping of the touching point out the conflict between prohibition and instinct. Tess wants nobody to kiss her or at least does not want Alec to kiss her, but he manages to grab the kiss, thus touching or encountering the prohibited. This unwilling retrieval of the kiss leads to the Chase scene where Alec maneuvers the sexual act. However, it does not mean he rapes or seduces Tess. She also responds, though, ambivalently. Her response is of huge psychological significance as it points out the conflict between the claims of ego and sexual instincts.

Tess's rape or seduction has remained a great puzzle for the critics due to the ambivalent nature of the event and Tess's confusing situation. Amid this ambivalent situation, Hardy has portrayed the psychology of feelings and has highlighted Tess's conflicting emotions who was inexperienced to tackle such situations. To consider Tess's sexual experience with Alec as rape or seduction would leave her no substantial place in the novel. The right approach is to locate her in the conflict between sexual instincts and ego instincts. It is this ambivalence which Hardy wants to point out in this critical position of Tess's life. Though Tess does not feel comfortable with Alec and repels him, yet she also appears to have some attraction towards him. Her ego instincts want her to avoid him and she feels guilty in giving him any response but her sexual feelings are motivated by his flirtation and advancements. In the Chase scene, she is presented in a complete ambivalent situation. Not only her emotional state is vague, the scenery, as well

as the commentary, is also ambivalent. The following conversation with Alec points out this ambivalent nature of things, “Tess, why do you always dislike my kissing you? I suppose — because I don’t love you. You are quite sure? I am angry with you sometimes!” (Hardy, 1994, p. 85). It is obvious that she does not give any straightforward answer to Alec, rather responds to his advancements. Similarly, she does not offer any precise resistance to the clasping of his arm around her. The following conversation is also important to point out the ambivalent nature of her emotions for Alec when he expresses his love for her as follows:

I ask once more, show your belief in me by letting me clasp you with my arm? Come, between us two and nobody else, now. We know each other well; and you know that I love you, and think you the prettiest girl in the world, which you are. Mayn’t I treat you as a lover? She drew a quick pettish breath of objection, writhing uneasily on her seat, looked far ahead, and murmured, ‘I don’t know — I wish — how can I say yes or no when —’. He settled the matter by clasping his arm round her as he desired, and Tess expressed no further negative. (Hardy, 1994, p.87)

Her ambiguous response towards Alec is obvious from this conversation. Hardy has presented the psychological working of the sexual instincts in this scene and kept it ambiguous because Tess (the subject itself) is not aware of the internal confrontation in which an instinct wants its satisfaction. The demands of instincts in consciousness can be easily tackled, but an unconscious thrust of instincts is impossible to repress. Psychologically, Tess is having a conflict between sexual and ego instincts. As she is not in love with Alec, her ego instincts are passive here. Further, although she responds to Alec, her this response is ambiguous because her sexual instincts, which follow the pleasure principle but do not set any high criterion of projection, agree to get satisfaction even from an unagreeable object. Tess’s sexual responses are the working of her sexual instincts which are operating in her unconscious. She loses her virginity in a continuing conflict between prohibition and instinct. Amid this confusing state of her feelings, she spends some weeks with Alec as his mistress, but her guilty conscience pricks her and she leaves Trantridge. Guilty consciousness points out the reprimands of the super-ego on the ego as it has sided with the id to fulfil its demands. According to Freud (1961), perception of guilt emanates from a conflict between ego and super-ego. To meet the criterion of her ego-ideal Tess projects her sexual involvement as her weakness and leaves Alec on the excuse of not being in love with him, as psychologically being in love is the functioning of ego. The first demand of her super-ego was the complete rejection of the pleasure principle and Tess fulfilled this demand by finishing every kind of connection with Alec. Therefore, Alec’s promises to be gentle, his claims of love, and his offers for compensation in any case of worst circumstances were not entertained by Tess. Instead, she develops a kind of hate for Alec and considers him good for nothing.

Tess’s momentary attraction and hate for Alec and her insistence that she was not in love with him is a matter of psychological significance and needs further explanation as in this momentary attraction her ego, which was immature, did not mediate in this confusing surrender. However, after learning the lesson, her ego under the criticism of her super-ego made her leave Alec. Her sexual relationship with Alec was an act of aggression imposed upon a ‘vessel of emotion untinged by experience’ (Hardy, 1994, p.13). That is why the discourse of the above-quoted passage points out Tess as a victim. However, psychologically, her momentary attraction confirms the instinctual

operation where an instinct after its satisfaction becomes indifferent to the object because instinct has not projected the satisfaction for some sublime purpose. Tess's relationship with Alec was an unpleasant relationship and the sexual act between them was the result of the thrust of their sexual instincts. This sexual act was not supported by the passion of love because her ego has not approved it. This provides a psychological reason for leaving Alec because her ego instincts cannot bear his presence as she was not in love with him. Her confused surrender was the working of the sexual instincts and her rejection or hate is the internal display of her ego instincts which seek preservation of the subject. That is why Tess says that her eyes were dazed by his ardent manners which resulted in a confused surrender. Freud (1957a) describes the phenomenon of love in describing the vicissitudes of instincts which proves Tess's decision of leaving Alec.

Love is derived from the capacity of the ego to satisfy some of its instinctual impulses auto-erotically by obtaining organ pleasure. It is originally narcissistic, then passes over on to objects, which have been incorporated into the extended ego, and expresses the motor efforts of the ego towards these objects as sources of pleasure. It becomes intimately linked with the activity of the later sexual instincts and, when these have been completely synthesised, coincides with the sexual impulsion as a whole. Preliminary stages of love emerge as provisional sexual aims while the sexual instincts are passing through their complicated development (Freud, 1957a, p. 138).

It is obvious from this passage that Tess's insistence on not being in love with Alec is a matter of her ego instincts which cannot allow the sexual instincts to surpass them. As ego represents external reality, the sexual instincts must be projected for some sublime aim, such as the procurement of reproduction and family. The conflict between sexual instincts and ego instincts is aptly described in Tess's relationship with Alec which explicates the functioning of the instinctive mechanism.

However, Tess's relationship with Angel Clare represents the claims of sexual instincts and ego instincts at a whole new level. Unlike Alec, Angel is a sensitive, educated, moralist, and a sophisticated individual whose psyche is under the control of the super-ego. Similarly, Tess's previous experiences have also made her surrender before her super-ego. Hardy has remarkably displayed the psychological inhibitions in their various encounters. Using the terminology of psychoanalysis, Tess represents life instincts, whereas Angel is the representative of the super-ego. Further, Angel has the tendency to intellectualize and theorize essential human emotions in abstractions which shows the control of the super-ego on the demands of the id. As in a normal human state, the ego remains in a compromising relationship with the id and super-ego. But due to Tess's past life, her ego has been overpowered by her super-ego. That is why; she represses her desires for Angel because her ego cannot mediate between the id and the super-ego. Similarly, Angel's id is also under the direct control of his super-ego. Though both are conflicted with the super-ego, the nature of their conflict is different. Tess's super-ego represents the sense of guilt induced by the cultural aspects, whereas Angel's super-ego represents the intellectual ideals. In his intellectual realm, anything flesh is material and gross. Therefore, Tess represents the external reality while Angel represents the intellectual ideals. In this regard, Hardy describes Tess's view of Angel which points out that she was considering him an abstraction of some intellectual and spiritual deity. Her subservient consideration of his image and a sense of inferiority before him were of religious importance. As she was suffering from a sense of guilt inculcated by cultural



standards, Angel was becoming a refined image of that cultural authority who can remove that guilt by taking her confessions and forgiving or punishing her. During their stay at Crick's dairy, they felt converging towards each other, but their respective conflicts induced certain inhibitions. For instance, Angel feels a strong desire to kiss Tess but as he gets closer to consummate the kiss, his super-ego intervenes, and he starts apologizing. This inhibition points out the effects of cultural values on Angel where he seeks satisfaction in abstractions while the amorous feelings are better expressed in physical terms. Angel's failure to accomplish the kiss is due to the restrictions imposed by the super-ego on his ego. As it has been stated earlier that Angel's desires were not in control of his ego, rather they were under the direct supervision of his super-ego. Freud (1959) explains that inhibition points out constraints on the ego. There was a similar case with Tess also. She was in love with Angel because of his refinement, intellectual beauty, and way of wooing. He has become her ideal, but they were helpless at the hands of a cruel super-ego which was increasing pressure on their respective egos. This situation gives birth to anxiety and inhibitions in Tess and Angel. Hardy has shown the relationship of ego with the desires and the cultural values which can be narrated as conflicts between id and ego as well as between ego and super-ego. It is important to point out the psychological vision of Hardy, who depicted the threats that ego must undergo due to unavoidable conditions. Freud (1961) has described these similar dangers also. He says that in certain situations, the ego must serve its three masters, i.e., instinctive stimuli of id, external world, and relentlessness of super-ego. However, ego comes under anxiety and conflicts while serving them because they exert diverse pressure upon the ego. Similarly, Angel's and Tess's egos are also in these dangers and are causing conflicts, anxiety, and inhibitions. Hardy has presented these issues by presenting culture and civilisation as background forces that act as a catalyst to intensify the dangers caused by the inner forces.

Tess's acute sense of guilt is obvious in her idealization of Angel and she wants to tell him about her misadventure with Alec. Amid all these confusions, they are married and on their wedding night, Angel confesses his past intimacy. Considering it the right moment, Tess also confesses her misadventure with Alec and asks forgiveness, but Angel refuses to forgive her and leaves her. His humanism, his hate for conventional morality, and his Hellenism were not enough to forgive Tess. Angel was a theoretical person and an intellectual rigid who could not bear any imperfections in his ideology. Tess was a personification of his abstract ideals. Tess, as an idea of the virginal daughter of nature, was welcome for him but a real human being like himself was unacceptable. His sexual instincts are completely surmounted by his super-ego which cannot allow him to forgive her because in forgiving her, it would be self-annihilation and Angel cannot do this. His mind considers sexuality as taboo and at this critical juncture of his life the primitivism returns in him. Angel's love for Tess is another example of the psychic ambivalence towards love and sexuality. The general appeal of his love is the idealisation of Tess which psychologically creates inhibitions in the actual performance of the sexual act. Angel's feelings for Tess were more of affection than sensual. To Freud (1957b), for a normal sexual relationship, the affectionate and the sensual current should be in balance. In the absence of this balance, the sexual activity would be absent. It does not mean that such people are sexually impotent. In fact, their sexual potency is capricious. Though they feel a strong desire for the sexual object but due to their idealisation of the object, they fail to materialise their idealisation into reality. Freud (1957b) further describes that in psychical impotency, it is not necessary that the sensual current has been overpowered

by the affectionate current. The sensual current remains partially active as their sexual activity manifests the lack of id's libido in the expression of their feelings. That is why their sexual feelings are fickle, agitated, and unpleasant. Therefore, their sensual current seeks those objects which do not recall any identification with the objects of their infantile interest. If there is any psychological identification, the feelings would lack erotic effect. This love is personified as sacred and profane love in art. That is why their love cannot compliment desire and their desire cannot compliment love. It is obvious that Tess becomes a real woman after her confession because she was not now the woman who was the object of Angel's idealisation. Besides these psychological interpretations of Angel's conduct concerning Tess, Hardy remarks on the effects of cultural values on the individual which highlights Angel's psychic ambivalence towards the cultural values and his intellectual as well as emotional aspirations. Hardy's approach is Freudian because he points out that civilisation is built on the suppression of instincts and how it is impossible for the individual to get rid of them.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The focal point of this paper was to explain the psychical ambivalence induced by the conflict between claims of sexual and ego instincts which cause a tragic downfall in Hardy's *T.D.* The paper explicates that sexual instincts are inherent, whereas ego instincts are cultural. For a successful and peaceful human system, there must be a synthesis between the natural and cultural, otherwise, humans cannot thrive. This paper offers a psychoanalytical interpretation of the conflicts between cultural values and instinctive mechanisms. Hardy has depicted these conflicts in the characters of Tess and Angel. Tess's sexual encounter with Alec induces a series of conflicts in her psyche which are manifested in her rejection of Alec, the sense of guilt, and the psychological turmoil in her relationship with Angel Clare. Similarly, Angel's idealization of essential human emotions and obdurate slavery of cultural ideals made him a rigid philosopher who could not assimilate humanism in his theoretical framework. This paper subtly emphasizes that human phenomenon must be considered in interpersonal relationships and not in the light of cultural values which used to be general and relative. The internal mechanism of the human psyche explicates the complexity of the individual psyche while cultural values illuminate the relative view of human affairs. To sum up the discussion, it is apparent that conflict between instinctive functioning and cultural values instigate a psychical ambivalence and ruin the beauty of human phenomenon.

## **VII. Limitations and Study Forward**

This study limits itself to a Freudian interpretation of sexual instincts and cultural values in Hardy's *T.D.* as the empirical insight provided by Freud in his respective work aptly augments the psychological insight offered by Hardy in his novel. This study can be furthered by applying Lacanian Psychoanalysis by foregrounding the role of language and culture in the formation of the psychological behaviour of Hardy's characters in this novel.

## **Endnote**

<sup>1</sup>Hardy, T. (1994). *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. New York: Penguin Books Ltd. All the subsequent quotations and citations refer to this edition. Further, the year has not been mentioned in the text to avoid repetition.

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