

SEMINAL GOTHIC DISSEMINATION IN HARDY'S WRITINGS

By Brigitte Hervoche-Bertho

I think I am one born out of due time, who has no calling here.

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If way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst.

— Hardy, “In Tenebris II,” *Poems of the Past and the Present*

CRITICS HAVE TOO OFTEN dismissed the Gothic elements in Thomas Hardy's writings as superficial trappings to be found mostly in his minor fiction.¹ The aim of this article is to show that the diffusion of Gothic motifs in the whole of Hardy's literary production is something both intentional and fruitful. The Gothic is indeed a vital part of Hardy's artistic vision, and it adds to the aesthetic value of his works. His major novels and his poetry are as rife with Gothic lore as his early “minor” fiction.² This propagation of Gothic elements is central to the dialectic between impregnation and dispersal contained in the etymology of the word “dissemination” (meaning both “sowing” and “scattering”).³

Hardy's critics and biographers agree on his taste for macabre folktales. Hardy found an imaginative stimulus in the legends and ballads of his native Dorset, in the novels of Harrison Ainsworth and Walter Scott, and in the paintings of James Turner.⁴ Hardy had also carefully studied Edmund Burke's aesthetics of the Sublime, as Johnson has shown. Several notes in his diary prove that to him the repulsive side of life could reveal its essential truth. He wrote that “[his] art [was] to intensify the expression of things, as is done by Crivelli, Bellini, etc . . . , so that their heart and inner meaning is made vividly visible” (F. E. Hardy 177).⁵ The Sublime is part and parcel of his literary philosophy. For him “the business of the poet and novelist is to show the sorriness underlying the grandest things, and the grandeur underlying the sorriest things” (171). Gothicity in Hardy's works is not a mere sacrifice to a literary trend or something residual. It is inborn and lasting.

THE SPREADING OF GOTHIC motifs to the whole of Hardy's works further consolidates the framework of a literary edifice already propped up by the seminal echoes to be found in poems such as “A Poor Man and a Lady,” “In a Wood,” “Tess's Lament,” and “The

Well-Beloved.”⁶ Gothic imagery weaves the fictional material into a consistent fabric, as we are going to see.

In accordance with Burke’s philosophy, Hardy relies on “obscurity,” “power,” “privation,” “vastness,” “sound,” “pain,” and “ugliness” to achieve sublimity.⁷ Very often, several categories are even combined to ensure maximum effect. Hardy contrasts the vastness and permanence of the landscape with man’s insignificance and vulnerability. At the opening of *Far from the Madding Crowd* the narrative voice strikes a “sublime” keynote by opposing some “tiny human frame” standing on a hill at midnight to the grandeur and silence of the universe described as “epic,” “stately,” “majestic,” and “fathomless” (58; ch. 2). This awe-inspiring description is soon followed by the “pastoral tragedy” announced in chapter 5. Chased by his foolish young dog, shepherd Oak’s flock of sheep break through the fence and fall down a precipice. The gruesome reference to the “heap of two hundred mangled carcasses” (86; ch. 5) triggers more macabre imagery. The metaphor of the “skeleton of a chrome-yellow moon” and the comparison of the pool with “a dead man’s eye” reflect Oak’s extreme despondency (87). Emphasis is laid on the defencelessness of a flock entirely composed of ewes and their lambs and on the recklessness of the dog. The episode clearly anticipates Troy’s thoughtless attitude to his wife, Bathsheba, and his responsibility in the early death of Fanny, his former mistress whom he has abandoned with child. The next striking scene is that of a devilish fire which threatens to destroy Bathsheba’s farm and which is fittingly put out by Bathsheba’s guardian angel, Gabriel Oak. Grotesque images of “red worms” and “imaginary fiery faces, tongues hanging from lips, glaring eyes, and other impish forms” are conjured up (94; ch. 6). The nightmarish description paves the way for even more striking elemental fury also staged at night. As Oak is helping Bathsheba to rescue her hay-ricks, the reader is gratified with another crop of macabre and grotesque lore. Ominous silence is broken by the “diabolical” sound of thunder and the wind performs “a perfect dance of death” — a phrase rich in medieval overtones: “The forms of skeletons appeared in the air, shaped with blue fire for bones — dancing, leaping, striding, racing around, and mingling altogether in unparalleled confusion” (308; ch. 37). The image of “undulating snakes” completes a list of awe-inspiring devices which would certainly have met with Burke’s approval. The presence of animals that are associated with evil comes as no surprise in relation to a woman whose beauty is said to belong “rather to the demonian than to the angelic school” (188; ch. 21). Destructive and misdirected as Bathsheba’s passion for Troy is symbolically made to appear, it is shown as trifling compared with the infuriated universe.

To this pageantry of fear two other ornaments are added, which illustrate Julia Kristeva’s essay on the powers of horror and, more particularly, her definition of abjection as caused “not [by] lack of cleanliness” but by “what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (4). The first ornament is a scene whose atmosphere is redolent of Poe’s incipit to “The Fall of the House of Usher.” After running away from home, disillusioned about her husband and desperate, Bathsheba spends the night near “a species of swamp,” a dismal noxious place which resists definition and hence epitomizes the “in-between.” Though described as “malignant” and “evil,” the spot exercises the same hypnotic fascination on Hardy’s heroine as the Usher tarn on Poe’s narrator. “The beautiful yellowing ferns with their feathery arms” and the “clammy” fungi with their rich colours, “some . . . saffron

yellow . . . some . . . leathery and of richest browns" (363; ch. 44) are both enticing and repellent. Beauty is hatching from decay since the fungus is growing "in all manner of positions from rotting leaves and tree stumps." Thus Hardy conforms to his credo: "To find beauty in ugliness is the province of the poet" (*Life* 213). The same ambivalence characterizes the description of the edge of the Talbothays garden where Tess is listening to the music of Angel's harp "like a fascinated bird." The peripheral uncultivated place is "damp and rank with juicy grass . . . and . . . weeds whose red and yellow and purple hues formed a polychrome as dazzling as that of cultivated flowers" (*Tess*; 178; ch. 19). Again nature is described as oozing and viscous. Neither solid nor liquid, sliminess is halfway between generation and degeneration. Its anomalous indeterminacy can be seen to convey the disturbing, disruptive, and transgressive potential of the abject.⁸

Hybridism is also attached to the second Gothic ornament announced earlier, the gargoyle which washes away Troy's floral tribute to his dead mistress in chapter 46 of *Far from the Madding Crowd*. This metamorphic grotesquerie plays its role of spout on two levels: in the literal sense, by carrying the excess of rain water, and in the figurative sense, as it seems to be jeering at Troy's "morbid misery" (377), thus exposing it as sham or untimely — at all events, incongruous — sentimentality.

Hideous interbreeding can also be seen at work in the description of the woods in *The Woodlanders*. The trees have "spectral arms," their branches are "disfigured with wounds" and rotting stumps are compared with "black teeth [rising] from green gums" (212; ch. 19). Though it may not be immediately perceived as functional, the grotesque plays a structural premonitory part in association with the macabre. The sepulchral setting prepares the reader for the death of Giles Winterborne, described as "one who [looks] and [smells] like Autumn's very brother" (261; ch. 28) and said to have "a marvellous power of making trees grow" (105; ch. 8). Before his death the setting sun turns the leaves to "gory hues" (378; ch. 42) and the rain puddles have "a corpse-eyed luminousness" (383). So naturally, when he dies, "the whole wood [seems] to be a house of death" (393; ch. 43).

Hardy's dismal imagery also serves to reflect the characters' moods, as in the episode when Grace and her husband's mistress, Mrs. Charmond, are lost in the "moan[ing]" wood at night. The "funereal trees rocked and chanted dirges" and the tree trunks and branches stand against the sky "in the forms of . . . gigantic candelabra" (301; ch. 33). The figurative burial is undoubtedly meant to be that of Grace's illusions about her husband, Fitzpiers. Thus a pattern of meaning is established.

Sometimes Hardy seems to indulge in the macabre to gratify a morbid imagination, as in the description of Fitzpiers in chapter 36. Seriously wounded by his father-in-law when the latter discovers that he has been unfaithful to Grace, Fitzpiers runs to his mistress's house for assistance. The description of his face, "corpse-like in its pallor, and covered with blood" simply serves sensationalism, since Fitzpiers rapidly recovers. Similarly, his association in the minds of the local people with black magic earlier in the novel, as he is shown dissecting a fragment of old John South's brain (181; ch. 18) and seems to be looking forward to people's demise so as to carry on his investigation, simply serves characterization. The reader expects him to murder his wife, as Manston does in Hardy's first published novel, *Desperate Remedies*. But it proves to be a red herring. His lady-killing potential remains unfulfilled, except in the figurative sense. Nonetheless onomastics and character-drawing ensure awe-inspiring intertextual transhistorical filiation. He is described by Mr. Cawtree as "a strange, deep, perusing gentleman" suspected of having

“sold his soul to the wicked one” (69; ch. 4). Indeed, the mysterious surgeon’s “compelling power” manages to hold Grace spell-bound (180; ch. 18). A cross between the legendary Dr. Faustus and the Byronic hero, Edred/dread Fitzpiers/pierce is also the descendant of Manston, Dare, Troy, “Daemon” Wildeve and the precursor of Alec d’Urberville, and all of them are the inheritors of the arch-villains of Gothic romance.

At other times the premonitory value of a macabre description can be perceived only very late in the novel. It is the case with the depiction of “lobes of fungi” growing on the older trees “like lungs”: “the lichen ate the vigour of the stalk, and the ivy slowly strangled to death the promising sapling” (93; ch. 7). It is not until chapter 43 that the reader fully understands that Grace herself is fungus- or ivy-like. She realizes that Giles has “immolated himself for her comfort” (336). When she comes to Giles for shelter, like a gentleman he surrenders his warm hut to his beloved against “a wretched little shelter of the roughest kind” exposed to the rain, and catches his death there (369; ch. 41). Grace unwittingly saps Giles’ vitality. He wastes away while she is thriving. She is like a carnivorous plant. Despite her association with light, she turns out to be an avatar of the fatal woman Mario Praz describes at length in *The Romantic Agony*. Grace Melbury — like Sue Bridehead in Hardy’s later novel *Jude the Obscure* — can be viewed as the female counterpart of the “decadent ephēbe,” the fair-haired youth embodied in Swithin St. Cleeve, the Adonis-like astronomer of *Two on a Tower*, and later, in the would-be free-thinker, Angel Clare. As in other end-of-century fiction, harmless-looking idealists often turn out to be as dangerous and destructive as Byronic heroes.⁹

As often in Hardy’s novels the grand overture in chapter 1 of *The Woodlanders* paves the way for an orchestration of the Sublime which is all the more arresting as it contrasts with the realistic painting of the pettiness and hardships of rural life and the pseudo-realistic geographical anchoring of the novel. Thus Little Hintock is marked out from the beginning as “one of those sequestered spots outside the gates of the world . . . where, from time to time, dramas of a grandeur and unity truly Sophoclean are enacted in the real, by virtue of the concentrated passions . . . therein” (44; ch. 1). Such solemnity is even more potent as the reference to tragic grandeur has already been preceded by a macabre reference to the “tomb-like stillness” of the place (41). The latter is ready for “the one feat alone — that of dying — by which a mean condition [can] be resolved into a grand one,” as Bathsheba exclaims in *Far from the Madding Crowd* when she understands how powerless a lover can be against a dead rival (357; ch. 43). In *The Woodlanders* this statement is first corroborated by the description of John South’s still profile “sublimed by the august presence of death” (154; ch. 15). And it reaches an apex with the Gothic display surrounding Giles Winterborne’s death.

Hardyan uniqueness certainly resides in the generic cross-fertilization which raises the commonplace to extra-ordinary status. The orchestration of the sublime and the tragic — a counterpoise to realism — can be perceived even more acutely in the novels posterior to *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *The Woodlanders*.¹⁰ Paroxysms of pain, noise, size, power, solitude, and ugliness are in keeping with the characters’ mythical dimension. Thus, the downfall of Michael Henchard, a former hay-trusser elevated to the rank of Mayor of Casterbridge is compared to Cain’s (*MC*; 388; ch. 43) and Job’s downfall (149; ch. 12; 360; ch. 40). Tess Durbeyfield, a simple dairy-maid, is raised to the rank of heroine in an Aeschylean tragedy (*Tess*; 489; ch. 59). Latter-day Delilahs are the death of Jude, a poor stone-mason often compared to Samson (*JO*; 89; I; ch. 7 and 457; VI; ch. 7). And

Jocelyn Pierston, the sculptor who vainly pursues the Well-Beloved, his feminine ideal, is twice likened to the Wandering Jew (*WB*; 66; II; ch. 2 and 156; III; ch. 2). As these characters are all provided with an acute sense of the supernatural and a strong death instinct, they are prone to experience events blending the preternatural, the terrible, and the grotesque.¹¹ Conforming to the technique of his Gothic forebears, Hardy never fails to associate his characters' low spirits with vast ominous ruins. Michael Henchard unwittingly chooses the "melancholy, impressive, lonely" Roman Amphitheatre outside the town of Casterbridge to make amends to his long lost wife whom he once sold to a sailor when he was drunk (*MC*; 141; ch. 11). The scene takes place at dusk, when the ruin is most lugubrious — an appropriate choice for a meeting with "poor fragile" Susan, who is "so pale that the boys [call] her 'The Ghost'" (153; ch. 13). Yet, Henchard's fateful choice of a place which, as the narrator intimates, is not a happy lovers' tryst, but a place of intrigue and of crime, does not stem from criminal intentions. He does not plan to kill Susan to marry his mistress, Lucetta. The guilt-haunted mayor simply wants to right a wrong without seeing his shameful past exposed to the eyes of the Casterbridge community. Ironically, he seems to ignore the ominousness of the place, whereas the reader is led to perceive the sinister environment as an apt setting, symbolic of his past cruelty to his wife:

Apart from the sanguinary nature of the games originally played therein, such incidents attached to its past as these: that for scores of years the town-gallows had stood at one corner; that in 1705 a woman who had murdered her husband was half-strangled and then burnt there in the presence of ten thousand spectators. Tradition reports that at a certain stage of the burning her heart burst and leapt out of her body, to the terror of them all, and that not one of those ten thousand people ever cared particularly for hot roast after that. In addition to these old tragedies, pugilistic encounters almost to the death had come off down to recent dates in that secluded arena. (141; ch. 11)

The three Gothic ingredients mentioned earlier can easily be traced in this historical review in which the line between history and legend, though tenuous, is nonetheless drawn clearly enough to inspire the reader with Gothic terror while preserving the credibility of the story. Later on in the novel Hardy resorts to the same trick consisting in providing a rational explanation for the preternatural. As after nightfall Henchard contemplates drowning in the Styx-like Blackwater Weir, a deserted place where the water is at its deepest and the noise loudest, he is horrified by the ghoulish apparition of his own dead body floating in the river (372; ch. 41). Though phantasmagoria is undercut by Henchard's discovery that his double is nothing more than a bundle of old clothes used to represent him at the skimmington-ride, Gothic terror is strong enough to turn the superstitious man away from suicide. It serves as a deterrent. In other places the characters are blind to the symbolic meaning of portentous Gothic motifs. The reference to the gallows in the passage quoted above could pass for mere indulgence in the macabre, were it not for yet another mention of the deadly framework in a later chapter. This time the Gothic backcloth is that of the "ruins of a Franciscan priory, and a mill attached to the same, the water of which roared down a back-hatch like the voice of desolation" and, next to them, a mysterious "pile of buildings" and "a square mass cut into the sky" which are eventually identified as the county gaol and the gallows (197–98; ch. 19). The information is delayed not only to achieve maximum effect, but also to stress Henchard's lack of insight. Though deeply

impressed by the lugubriousness of the spot, he fails to see himself as the hanged man, the “missing feature, without which the design remained incomplete . . . , the corpse of a man” (198). His disregard of the warning condemns him to an early death in utter solitude and a burial in unconsecrated ground and in total anonymity — in other words, to little better than the shameful death of a gallows-bird. Similarly, Henchard’s mistress, Lucetta, fails to foresee the skimmington-ride, the “Daemonic Sabbath” which will shame and terrorize her to death (353; ch. 39). Ironically, though she sees the ghastly mask over the doorway of her house as a stigma of past intrigue, she is unable to establish a connexion with her own extra-marital affair with the mayor. Yet, significantly, the grotesquely leering mask, with its hideously distorted human features, is the “keystone” of an old arched back door, a secret exit leading to an alley by which “it had been possible to come unseen from all sorts of quarters in the town — the old play-house, the old bull-stake, the old cock-pit, the pool wherein nameless infants had been used to disappear” (212; ch. 21). The satirical procession merely duplicates Casterbridge schoolboys who, for generations, “[have] thrown stones at the mask, aiming at its open mouth.” Its “lips and jaws” have been “chipped off . . . as if they had been eaten away by disease” (212; ch. 21). This imagery of decay soon finds an echo in the “miasmatic fog” which is compared to the secret of Lucetta’s scandalous past that spreads through Mixen Lane, a haunt of criminals, and “up the back streets of Casterbridge” (341; ch. 37). Physical distortion and contamination are symptomatic of moral corruption. Again, blindness to Gothic signs results in tragedy. Lucetta dies of a miscarriage, thus adding procreative inadequacy to her incompetence to decipher semiotic language. Seminal Gothic dissemination gradually comes to be construed not merely as a fruitful sowing of Gothic motifs but also as a scattering of seed/semen and a dispersal of meaning due to semic/semiotic instability. The sterility of the Casterbridge landscape reflects the main character’s own parental ineffectiveness. Elizabeth-Jane is not Henchard’s daughter. The latter did not survive her father’s abandonment.

THE IMAGE OF THE STILL-BORN child, striking as it is when it applies to the emergence of “the bleared white visage of a sunless winter day” (*W*; 62; ch. 4), persistently haunts Hardy’s later novels. Tess’s illegitimate child, Sorrow, dies when he is only a few months old. Sue’s still-born baby tolls the bell of maternity shortly after the murder of her two children by Little Father Time, the prematurely aged child of Jude’s first marriage. The freakish little boy “with an octogenarian face” (*JO*; 381; *V*; ch. 7) hangs his innocent brother and sister before hanging himself because, as he explains in a note, “we are too menny” (410; *VI*; ch. 2). As for the childless sculptor of *The Well-Beloved*, he is the last of the Pierstons. Sterility and child death epitomize Hardy’s *fin-de-siècle* sense of the ending of the human race. Like his Victorian contemporaries, Hardy must have read, or at least heard about Morel’s and Nordau’s apocalyptic treatises about the decline of the human species.¹² His later novels reflect a concern with the impoverishment of blood/semen.¹³ One of his late characters is the proponent of the theory of heredity. When Tess confesses her past sexual relations with Alec d’Urberville on their wedding night, Angel blames his wife’s “want of firmness” on her descent: ““Decrepit families imply decrepit wills, decrepit conduct”” (302; ch. 35). It corroborates the unpleasant impression Angel had when he saw the sinister portraits of Tess’s female ancestors at Wellbridge that “[Tess’s] fine features were unquestionably traceable in these exaggerated forms” (284; ch. 34). Thus he also

proves an unavowed adept of the Lavaterian school of physiognomy, according to which a person's face was a true indication of character. Later on, when he learns that Tess has killed Alec, he again associates her crime with the insanity of an effete aristocracy: "[he] wondered what obscure strain in the d'Urberville blood had led to this aberration — if it were an aberration. There momentarily flashed through his mind that the family tradition of the coach and murder might have arisen because the d'Urbervilles had been known to do these things" (475; ch. 57). Angel does not realise that Alec and himself, not genetic regression, generated this aberration — "if it were an aberration." When the dispersal of semen follows that of blood, then impregnation is no longer successful. It leads to the premature death of Sorrow, "that bastard gift of shameless Nature" (146; ch. 14) whose inexperienced child-mother fails to provide with the necessary instinctive will to live. Ironically, Alec remarks that Tess is "as weak as a bled calf" (415; ch. 48), when he should confess his responsibility in the blood-letting. He is little better than a vampire who infects Tess with a violence which she, in turn, uses against him, first when she swings her heavy leather glove in his face (411; ch. 47) and last when she stabs him to death in his bed (471; ch. 56). As the pale, breathless, quivering young woman confides to her incredulous husband: "I feared long ago, when I struck him on the mouth with my glove, that I might do it some day for the trap he set for me in my simple youth and his wrong to you through me" (474; ch. 57). Impregnation by her legitimate husband is rendered impossible by dispersal. Because of his flight to Brazil, consummation is postponed until it coincides with the physical consumption of husband and wife. The sublimity of their ultimate fusion, the counterpart of the initial "gravitation of the two into one" (210; ch. 24) stems from the strength of their passion to overcome physical dereliction. Both are dead alive. Angel has become a "mere yellow skeleton" (465; ch. 55) behind which "you could . . . almost [see] the ghost" (454; ch. 53) and when he meets his wife again, he has a vague consciousness that "his original Tess ha[s] spiritually ceased to recognize the body before him as hers — allowing it to drift, like a corpse upon the current, in a direction dissociated from its living will" (467; ch. 55).

Though blood and lineage, two major end-of-century obsessions, haunt the novel, the most salient features of Gothic fiction are still present throughout. At the opening of the novel the reader is told that "like all the cottagers in Blackmoor Vale, Tess [is] steeped in fancies and prefigurative superstitions" (84; ch. 6). As a matter of fact, she seems perpetually engaged in sign-reading: of the pricking of her chin in chapter 6, the red letters of the painter of scriptures in chapter 12, and the afternoon cock's crow in chapter 33, to give only a few examples. Ill omens, gloomy legends, and family curses condition her life, turning it into a destiny. All of them are foreshadowings of her tragic fate and contribute to the macabre atmosphere of the novel. Her rape in the primaeval forest of The Chase repeats the nightly violation of the mail/male cart which proved fatal to Prince, the Durbeyfields' horse, as well as the medieval legend of the white hart killed by "some shooting-party" described as vampiric, with "a bloodthirsty light in their eyes" (352; ch. 51). Her murder of Alec echoes the dismal legend of the d'Urberville Coach. And her hanging, adumbrated as early as chapter 18 by the comparison of the dairyman's knife and fork "planted erect on the table" to "the beginning of a gallows" (175), duplicates the agony of the pheasants in chapter 41 and the hanging of the malefactor at the place called "Cross-in-Hand." The description of the spot reminds the reader of the Roman Amphitheatre in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*:

Of all spots on the bleached and desolate upland this was the most forlorn. It was so far removed from the charm which is sought in landscape by artists and view-lovers as to reach a new kind of beauty, a negative beauty of tragic tone. The place took its name from a stone pillar which stood there, a strange rude monolith, from a stratum unknown in any local quarry, on which was roughly carved a human hand. Differing accounts were given of its history and purport. Anyhow, whatever the origin of the relic, there was and is something sinister, or solemn, according to mood, in the scene amid which it stands; something tending to impress the most phlegmatic passer-by. (389; ch. 45)

In this description Gothic dissemination is synonymous with semiotic dispersal, since there is no final interpretation of the relic. Accordingly, when Alec claims that the pillar “was once a Holy Cross” and has Tess put her hand upon the stone hand and swear that she will never tempt him, he cannot really be accused of misleading her (390 ; ch. 45). Yet, it is not the impression the reader gets when, some time later, to Tess’s question about the meaning of the old stone, a shepherd answers that it is “a thing of ill-omen” which “was put up in wuld times by the relations of a malefactor who was tortured there by nailing his hand to a post and afterwards hung” (391). Tess seems horrified by the gruesome information — though to the modern reader the “*petite mort*” that she is said to feel superimposes the Freudian notion of orgasmic pleasure upon the Victorian acceptation of the phrase. Nevertheless, Alec is eventually punished for his attempt at semiotic appropriation and his usurpation of Tess’s ancestral name. The image of the “gigantic ace of hearts” that signals his death at the close of the novel also symbolises the victory of the sign and Alec’s undoing (471; ch. 56). In fact, the gothicness of the text also shows in the plurality of contradictory meanings that it carries. It is true that the characters are betrayed by semiotic instability and onomastic indirection, as is intimated by Parson Clare’s musing about “his misnamed Angel” (420; ch. 49). Yet, semiotic polyphony is undoubtedly seminal insofar as it participates in textual fertilization.¹⁴ The linguistic violence that Lecercle diagnoses in *Tess* is a *sine qua non* of textual sublimity, since literary creation is inseparable from the letter whose deadliness appears more and more clearly in Hardy’s later novels and in his poetry.¹⁵ As Jude says to Sue, quoting from the Bible (II Corinthians iii, 6) and echoing the epigraph on the title page of *Jude the Obscure*, “the letter killeth” (468; ch. 8). Though it is primarily against blind obedience to moral and religious principles that Jude is warning Sue, the late twentieth century reader is also led to reflect upon the violence of textual inscriptions. The grotesque in *Tess* mainly originates in the sign. It is to escape being misread by men as an object of desire that Tess defaces herself in chapter 42, covering her hair and most of her face with a handkerchief and clipping her eyebrows off. By doing this she becomes “a mommet of a maid” (354), a hybrid creature, since the word “mommet” is Dorset dialect for “scarecrow.” She exchanges beauty for sublimity. Her abjection allows her to become “part of the landscape,” hence part of infinity (355). Her disfigurement parallels that of nature by the sign-painter in chapter 12. Tellingly enough, the words “hideous defacement” used to describe the ruination of nature personify it so strikingly that the reader can hardly fail to notice the similarity between the two episodes and the two faces (128). Later on at Flintcomb-Ash the “in-between” is triumphant as Hardy’s Gothic imagery mingles the vegetable, the animal and the human in a metamorphic blurring of boundaries:

The whole field was in colour a desolate drab; it was a complexion without features, as if a face, from chin to brow, should be only an expanse of skin. The sky wore, in another colour, the same likeness; a white vacuity of countenance with the lineaments gone. So these two upper and nether visages confronted each other all day long, the white face looking down on the brown face and the brown face looking up at the white face, without anything standing between them but the two girls crawling over the surface of the former like flies. (360; ch. 43)

Gothic dissemination can also be felt in the grotesque punctuation of the sign-painter's inscription: "THY, DAMNATION, SLUMBERETH, NOT" and in the capitalized letters which strike the reader a visual blow. Textual violence is not limited to the violence that the text wreaks, it also implies violence to the text, like the semic violence discernible in the sign-painter's phonetic/phonemic reduction of the text to a defective "tex," or the hybridism of a language "in between" Dorset dialect and standard English, *Ur* and *urb*, field and ville, Blackmoor and Blakemore. In the rape scene Tess is figured as a white page stained by a male inscription: the narrator wonders "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 coarse pattern as it was doomed to receive" (119; ch. 11). The equation between sexual and textual violence is easy to make. Examining the novel's subtitle, its epigraph and its revised prefaces and plot, Susan David Bernstein writes that "Tess's body work[s] as a synecdoche for the body of Hardy's text" (164). According to her, textual mutilation parallels the wounds Tess's name, body, and reputation suffer. Bernstein sets off the correlation between Hardy's vindication of Tess's purity in the novel's subtitle and his defense of his text's purity in his prefaces. She considers enforced self-editing and imposed revisions as a violation of the textual body. Though she sees blankness as "signifying more potently than words the unnarratable: a woman's account of her rape," she nevertheless perceives its virtue: "the blank space substituted for the remembering of a fiercely dismembering act perpetrated against a woman's body likewise protects Tess's story itself from linguistic dismemberment by her confessors both within and beyond the narrative" (175). If textual gaps do protect the textual body from misconstruction, they can also be said to belong to the Gothic rhetoric of the ineffable that sets the Gothic morbid imagination going. So does the black flag which signals that Tess has been hanged as well as other cases of obfuscation traceable to earlier chapters: the rape scene in the forest and the murder scene at The Herons. Similarly, Hardy's explanatory note to the first book-length edition of *Tess* best epitomizes Hardy's Gothic susceptibility. Here he thanks periodical editors for enabling him to "piece the trunk and limbs of the novel together" and extends gothic dislocation to the whole of the Frankensteinian fictional enterprise of dis-memberment/re-memberment.

The reification of the human that the sign operates can hardly be dissociated from a process of mineralization of the human. If the supremacy of the sign over the human body is signalled by the black flag of the last chapter, petrification is at its most sublime in the penultimate chapter. In the dead of a moonless night, the colossal pillars of Stonehenge, a "monstrous place," "a very Temple of the Winds," convey Gothic grandeur to Tess's symbolic surrender on the altar of sacrifice: "The wind, playing upon the edifice, produced a booming tune, like the note of some gigantic one-stringed harp" (483; ch. 58).¹⁶ The simile provides an ironic counterpoint to the "plaintive melody" of Angel's "second-hand" harp, which nonetheless brought tears to Tess's eyes (177; ch. 19). The first stage in the process of miner-

alization of Tess takes place at Wellbridge, a former d'Urberville ancestral mansion, where the diamonds Angel has adorned Tess's neck with as a wedding present "[give] a sinister wink like a toad's" (293; ch. 34). The grotesque image combining extremes of beauty and hideousness initiates a diabolical transmutation of Tess's shadow and of the room: "the fire in the grate look[s] impish — demoniacally funny" and "the fender grin[s] idly" (297; ch. 35). Such a freakish distortion matches the "grotesque . . . prestidigitation" induced by Tess's confession, as Angel remarks bitterly: "'You were one person; now you are another'" (298). The eerie personification of objects shows a displacement of (Angel's) emotions onto the setting: the sexualized Tess has become object/abject. A feeling of nausea comes over Angel who simply cannot stay in a room where the now loathed "Other" is. Tess is reduced to following her husband outside and walking behind him "as in a funeral procession" (303), thus anticipating Mrs Edlin's gloomy remark that "'weddings be funerals . . . nowadays'" (*JO*; 479; VI; ch. 9). The second stage occurs when the sleep-walking Angel rolls Tess in her sheet, "as in a shroud" and deposits her in the empty stone coffin of an abbot in the ruined choir of the Abbey-church (320; ch. 37). The third stage coincides with the contact/contract between Tess's hand and the stone hand in chapter 45. And the fourth shows the proximity of the bed and the tomb at Kingsbere/King's bier, when the bereaved Durbeyfields erect their four-post bedstead under the south wall of the church where the d'Urberville family vaults lie. The sick joke Alec plays on Tess in the family crypt, when a recumbent figure suddenly moves and turns out to be Alec himself, shows how tenuous the frontier is between the dead and the living. This sacrilegious impersonation by one who later admits he is a "sham" d'Urberville (437; ch. 51) is one more attempt at the violation of a pristine place and the usurpation of the d'Urberville rights. It is also proleptic of the trespasser's ulterior punishment by a "genuine" d'Urberville, one who could claim the right to be buried in the ancestral crypt.

MINERALIZATION REACHES ITS APOGEE in Hardy's last two novels. Closely linked to Gothic architecture, these books could be defined as "collocations of stones."¹⁷ When Proust's hero praised Hardy's stone-cutter's sense of geometry in *The Well-Beloved*, he did not perceive the threat of textual entropy inherent in textual petrification.¹⁸ The symmetrical structure of the latter does remind the reader of young Hardy's training in architecture: the first part, entitled "A young man of twenty," acquaints the reader with Avicé I; the second part, "A young man of forty," centers around Avicé II; and the third part, "A young man of sixty," introduces Avicé III. Reduced to very little, the plot's main characteristic lies in its repetitiveness. As for the eponymous hero of *Jude the Obscure*, he is a "Gothic mason" (170; II; ch. 7) specializing in church restoration, like young Thomas Hardy. The sculptor Jocelyn Pierston is onomastically programmed to "pierce stone." That descendant of stone-cutters spends his life translating his dreams of the Well-Beloved into plaster (51; I; ch. 9). As "his experiences had dictated his statuary" (68; II; ch. 2), the day when a fever removes his obsessive love his "artistic sense" leaves him altogether (209; III; ch. 8). This corroborates what was said earlier about the violence of the act of writing in *Tess*. Here it applies to the art of writing with a chisel. Petrification is shown to be intrinsic to art in general. Pierston himself undergoes reification and suffers desiccation: when Avicé III learns that he was her mother's and her grandmother's lover, she looks at him as at "a strange fossilized relic in human form," wondering whether he has also been her great-grandmother's lover (177; III; ch. 4). This sudden grotesqueness

places Jocelyn “in between” the human, the animal, and the mineral, and thus turns him into a gargoyle. Abjection provokes a fever which miraculously and paradoxically cures him of his obsessional love, while leaving him prematurely aged and desiccated. At sixty he looks seventy five and has no more love to give a woman, as he says to Marcia in the final chapter (216; III; ch. 8). His physical ruination echoes that of his native island, a “towering rock,” “a solid and single block of limestone four miles long” (3-4; I; ch. 1) worn away by the elements and dug into by the quarrymen. That cramped space is like a rocky palimpsest in which Pagan inscriptions can still be read under those of Christianity: “The [Hope] church had slipped down with the rest of the cliff, and had long been a ruin. It seemed to say that in that last stronghold of the Pagan divinities, where Pagan customs lingered yet, Christianity had established itself precariously at best. In that solemn spot Pierston kissed [Avice]” (13; I; ch. 2). In the same palimpsestual way the second and the third Avices, confounding replicas — perfect “clones” one might say today — of Avice I, will not succeed in obliterating the inscription left in Jocelyn’s heart by the deceased prototype. If the sublimity of the wind-swept island eroded by the raging sea satisfies Burke’s criteria, the preternatural combines with the terrible and the grotesque in the embodiment, disembodiment, and re-embodiment of the Well-Beloved. Each incarnation is said to be a temporary residence which becomes “a corpse,” an “empty carcase” once the spirit of the Well-Beloved has left (33; I; ch. 7 and 50; I; ch. 9). “Sprite, witch, troll” (114; II; ch. 9), the “ghostliness” of his feminine ideal fills Jocelyn with fear and “terror of love” (10-11; I; ch. 2 and 95; II; ch. 6).

Jude’s beloved Sue is also suspected of being “a sort of fay, or sprite” (429; VI; ch. 3). Yet, contrary to Pierston, Jude does not escape mineralization and ends up a corpse with “marble features” (490; VI; ch. 11). Like Tess, he is the victim of a family curse (116; I; ch. 11); like her, his doom is announced very early in the novel: “He was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life should signify that all was well with him again” (56; I; ch. 2). The many references to the gibbet of his ancestor (116; I, ch. 11; 349; V, ch. 4 ; 471; VI, ch. 8) are reminiscent of the proleptic references to the gallows in *Tess*. As Jude is not hanged, the reader feels a victim of semiotic misdirection. The ghastly image can thus be perceived as typical of Gothic dissemination. Like Tess, Jude is a victim of fragmentation, the “deadly war waged between flesh and spirit” Hardy refers to in his preface to the first edition of the novel. Jude is the victim of women who are either experts at splitting the body into parts, like Arabella, described by John Maynard as “a set of detachable sexual parts” (285),¹⁹ with her “supernumerary hair-coils, and her optional dimples” (359; V; ch. 5) or unable, like Sue, to reconcile body and spirit. Now “a pet lamb” (97; I; ch. 8), now a pig (429; VI; ch. 3), he is animalized and sacrificed by two equally Circe-like women. Which does not mean that Jude himself is not responsible for his misdirection. Semiotic dispersal and reification can be seen at work jointly in the carved hand pointing to Christminster and the word “thither” that Jude has cut with his chisel on the back of a milestone indicating the mileage to Christminster and “embodying his aspirations” (120; I; ch. 11). Gradually screened by grass and nettles, Jude’s inscriptions are eventually “nearly obliterated by moss” (470-71; VI; ch. 8). Christminster is described as a necropolis with colleges compared to “family vaults” (130; II; ch. 2). The “extinct air” of middle-age porticoes and doorways and “the rottenness of the stones” create a typically Gothic decor. Though it seems impossible to Jude “that modern thought could house itself in such decrepit superseded chambers” (125; II; ch. 1), it takes him a long

time to understand that “mediaevalism [is] as dead as a fern-leaf in a lump of coal ; that other developments [are] shaping in the world around him, in which Gothic architecture and its associations [have] no place” (131; II; ch. 2). He vainly and stubbornly strives at the restoration of the dilapidated masonries of old Gothic churches. “Fearful of life, spectre-seeing always,” as he confesses to Sue (205; II; ch. 4), he addresses the Colleges’ ghosts as he is walking in the deserted streets of Christminster at night (127; II; ch. 1), and hears them when he is hardly better than a corpse (473; VI; ch. 9). His death on Remembrance Day enables him to join the spectral scholars he had been talking to. Whether women are responsible for diverting him from his aspirations or whether he is altogether mistaken about those aspirations, either way for Jude religion and sexual passion are quite similar. As Maynard notices, “Hardy pointedly has [Jude] formally exchange his Christian idealism for his idealistic love for Sue” (289). Maynard’s architectural imagery shows that Gothic dissemination articulates construction and deconstruction:

One is led easily to speak of Hardy’s novel in terms of deconstruction — not as a mode of critical interpretation but as a way of speaking about Hardy’s own thinking — because his view of both sexuality and religion so clearly reveals that they are constructed things, fabrications by culture out of words. . . . Somehow the architecture or adhesion has gone out of both cultural systems so that they seem to sit in ruins about the author. (290)

Gothic dissemination is apparent not only in the physical ruination of characters and setting but also in the linguistic/semiotic confusion which reveals a moral ruination. The “in-between” reigns supreme in a novel where babies are either born dead or old and where child-like adults seem forever unfit for the world they were born into.²⁰ Yet, far from being associated with the effete-ness of an aging civilization, Jude’s feminine sensibility and Sue’s boyishness are presented as appealing, not repulsive. As Laura Green puts it : “The novel participates ambivalently in the fin-de-siècle representation of the educated woman as monstrously unsexed, representing that ‘monstrosity’ as intensely attractive” (540). Sue is “in between” insofar as she combines the incorporeal figure of the beginning-of-century domestic angel with an end-of-century instability of gender attributes. Green continues, “If Hardy’s portrait of Sue revises the image of female degeneracy that dominated the anti-feminist discourse of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it does so . . . by revealing that ‘something which having ceased to be a woman is not yet a man’ can inspire longing as well as repugnance” (542).²¹ Sue and Jude view themselves as pioneers, non conformist victims of a blinkered society. As Sue tells Jude:

‘Everybody is getting to feel as we do [about marriage]. We are a little beforehand, that’s all. In fifty, a hundred, years the descendants of these two will act and feel worse than we. They will see weltering humanity still more vividly than we do now, as “Shapes like our own selves hideously multiplied,” and will be afraid to reproduce them.’ (354; V; ch. 4)

Hardy did not see *Jude the Obscure* as a scandalous attack on Victorian morality and decency. He certainly did not think that its protagonists were decadent or degenerate — and least of all obscene. His challenge to Victorian orthodoxy appeals to late twentieth century readers as a modern reflection on sexual identity and a daring questioning of gender roles. Yet, Sue’s words contain a threat to the reproductive function and a menace

of extinction of the race. Though Hardy challenged gender definitions and dealt a blow to the Victorian cult of domesticity, he seemed to have mixed feelings about the "New Woman" of the 1890s. Hardy was a transitional figure, and what fascinated the modern writer in him probably also repelled his Victorian susceptibility. Sue's avowed cruelty, to men in general and to Jude in particular, and her feeling of guilt for infecting the mind of Little Father Time with morbid reflections combine with her extreme pallor, to conjure up the *fin-de-siècle* female vampire.²² Mrs. Edlin recalls that when Sue recited "The Raven" as a child she seemed to see the creature and would "glare round tragically" (161; II; ch. 6). Her association with the "carrion bird" of Poe's famous poem reinforces the impression that, like the sinister vulture, she is a figure of terror.

"THE VAMPIRINE FAIR" in Hardy's third collection of poems, *Time's Laughingstocks* (1909), resumes the myth of the dangerous woman. The young beauty, who drains the cash from her husband's pockets, drives her male slave to ruin and suicide. As late a poem as "Something Tapped" (written in 1913), published in Hardy's fourth volume of verse, *Moments of Vision* (1917), draws its inspiration from the same source as "The Raven":

Something tapped on the pane of my room
When there was never a trace
Of wind or rain, and I saw in the gloom
My weary Belovéd's face.

Yet, the Gothic material is subverted by Hardy's ironic treatment. Instead of the awesome Poesque raven, "Only a pallid moth, alas" taps at the pane. Though the gloom which offended late Victorians remains seminal to Hardy's poetic vision, Gothic dissemination is becoming more and more synonymous with parody/distortion or reversal, and ultimately entropy.

Burkean sublimity can be found on Wessex heights, "On Stinsford Hill at Midnight," where obscurity and infinity make apparitions possible and in the "night tempests" and the grandeur of "Alpine height" and "Polar peak" of "Doom and She." Doom rhymes with gloom and tomb in a majority of poems, and more particularly in those of 1912–13 dedicated to the loved one, Hardy's first wife, slighted in her lifetime but transfigured by death. The choice of a medieval setting in "The Abbey Mason" and "In Sherborne Abbey" shows that Gothic architecture best conveys spirituality and sacredness in an age of rationalism. Hardy's verse is mainly about death, burial and haunting. "On the Death-bed," "Over the Coffin," and "After the Burial" illustrate Hardy's morbid obsession. Similarly, "The Haunter," "The Shadow on the Stone," and "Evening Shadows" bear the imprint of the supernatural. Even late poems such as "The Clapsed Skeletons" and "The Ballad of Love's Skeleton" still reveal Hardy's taste for the macabre, and so does the ghastly "charnel-eyed Pale Horse" of Hardy's last poem "He resolves to Say No More." The world of the poems resembles the novels' crepuscular world, in which Gothic dissemination combines semic/onomastic dispersal with dispersal of semen, as in "The Dead Bastard." Yet, more and more often, though all the ingredients of Gothic terror are there, the atmosphere is not one of terror. In "A Merrymaking in Question" what is in question is not so much the merrymaking as the Gothic mode itself. Indeed, the unexpected merrymaking of the wind "like a bassoon," of the headstones "all ranged up as dancers,"

of the cypresses “droning a croon,” and of the gargoyles “that mouthed to the tune” is both a sardonic reminder of the speaker’s deadness and a “carnivalization” of the Gothic mode.²³ Here the *danse macabre* or Dance of Death is not one in which the dead lead the living to the grave, but one in which Gothic signs make fun of the dead themselves, which is yet another case of semiotic dispersal. Parodic distortion undermines the Gothic mode. The reversal between the dead and the living, already striking in “The Dead Man Walking,” is again illustrated in a late poem, “Thoughts at Midnight.” Gothicity stems from the living, not the dead anymore: it is mankind that is “demonic,” “sinister,” and “hideous.” At the same time the voices of the dead become loud enough to devour the poetic space. Very often the speakers are ghosts, as in ““Ah, are you Digging on my Grave ?”” They also have their say in “Spectres that Grieve” and “Channel Firing” and establish a dialogue with the living in “The To-be Forgotten” and “The Dead and the Living One.” On the whole, familiarity with the dead sets a limit to the Gothic mode. If “death is a kind friend!”, as one of the rustics in *Far from the Madding Crowd* exclaims (348; ch. 42), it means that death and the dead no longer inspire awe. The taming of death tolls the decline of the Gothic mode — unless, on the contrary, it hails the rise of a metamorphic species. Gothic signs are still central to the semiotic and hermeneutic quest, as can be seen in “A Sign-seeker,” “Signs and Tokens,” “The Prophetess,” and “Premonitions.” But deciphering here is as difficult as in the novels and “the letter killeth” in the poems too. The deadliness of the written word is best epitomized in the numerous epitaphs which combine mineralization and textual entropy. Already looming in *The Well-Beloved*, the threat of textual entropy can be felt more acutely in the growing shortness of Hardy’s poems, culminating in the laconic words cut on tombstones: “Epitaph,” “Epitaph on a Pessimist,” “Cynic’s Epitaph,” “A Placid Man’s Epitaph,” and “A Necessitarian’s Epitaph.” The next, ultimate stage in Gothic dissemination is the temptation of silence, expressed in the last poem of Hardy’s last book of verse, *Winter Words*, published posthumously, “He resolves to Say No More.” Silence alone can ward off any misinterpretation of the written word and protect the poet from the pessimist’s tag he had always resented, as can be seen in Hardy’s introductory note to his eighth book of verse: “My last volume of poems was pronounced wholly gloomy and pessimistic by reviewers. . . . As labels stick I foresee readily enough that the same perennial inscription will be set on the following pages” (*Works* 795). The posthumously published note leaves the reader with the eerie impression that the poet has joined the countless ghosts who people his verse and has come back to haunt the reviewers whose reactions he had rightly anticipated.

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NOTES

1. See Scott, who examines Gothic elements in Hardy’s first published novel (*Desperate Remedies*, 1871) and four short stories: “The Withered Arm,” “A Committee-Man of ‘the Terror,’” “Barbara of the House of Grebe,” and “The Doctor’s Legend.” See also Mistichelli, who finds fault with Scott’s failure to “prove in any satisfactory way [the] connection [of the Sublime and the Gothic] to Hardy’s perception of things” (105 n25).
2. “Major” novels include a selection from the category “Novels of Characters and Environment,” namely *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The*

Woodlanders (1887), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), and *Jude the Obscure* (1896). In his 1912 "General Preface to the Novels and Poems" written for Macmillan's definitive "Wessex" edition of his works, Hardy placed these novels on a higher plane than his "Romance and Fantasies" and his "Novels of Ingenuity." This list also includes *The Well-Beloved*. Though it was serialized as early as 1892, it was not published in book form until 1897. Far from being mere apprentice work — Hardy classified it under the heading "Romance and Fantasies" — this last published novel may be viewed as the novelist's last will and testament, and deemed invaluable as such.

Except for *The Well-Beloved*, we have used the 1978 Penguin edition of the novels. The novel titles above mentioned will be abbreviated as follows: *FFMC*, *MC*, *W*, *Tess*, *JO*, and *WB*. About Hardy's classification, see Purdy 286. This study will not include *The Return of the Native*, which has already been thoroughly examined by Johnson. In this article which deals with the influence of Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) on Hardy's conception of literary effectiveness, Johnson contends that Hardy used Burke's *Enquiry* as a handbook when writing *The Return of the Native*.

Two studies devoted to Hardy's fiction also seem particularly relevant to this study of the Gothic, namely Vigar and Escuret. The conclusion to Escuret's comprehensive investigation of the macabre in Hardy's fiction is that shedding light on human perversions vindicates the rights of the too often slighted body. The macabre also serves the dialectic at the heart of Miller's *Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire*. Ironically, death exacerbates desire.

3. For a definition of the word "dissemination" see Cuddon: "The verb to *disseminate* means 'to sow or scatter abroad,' 'to propagate,' 'to diffuse'; hence the idea of scattering, spreading and impregnating; especially the spreading of seed (Lat. *semen*, 'seed')" (250).
4. See Scott for more bibliographical details about Hardy's indebtedness to Impressionist painters and Gothic novelists.
5. Written in the third person by Hardy and published posthumously under Florence's name, *The Life of Thomas Hardy* contains in one volume the two works originally published separately as *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, 1840-1891* (London, 1928) and *The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, 1892-1928* (London, 1930).
6. Respectively taken from *Human Shows* (1925), *Wessex Poems* (1898), and *Poems of the Past and the Present* (1901), these poems echo *The Poor Man and the Lady* (1868), *The Woodlanders* (1887), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), and *The Well-Beloved* (1897). Thus ordered, irrespective of the dates of their publication, these lyrics are likely to be perceived as milestones on Hardy's fictional road. Though the last three can be viewed as the "offspring" of Hardy's novels, a note added by the author himself at the end of the first of these poems makes it appear not as further development or enlargement, but as a last remnant: "The foregoing was intended to preserve an episode in the story of *The Poor Man and the Lady*, written in 1868, and, like these lines, in the first person; but never printed, and ultimately destroyed."
7. These are Burke's categories which Johnson examines one by one in relation to *The Return of the Native*.
8. See Hurley, especially the section entitled "Theorizing slime," 33-38.
9. The expression "decadent ephebe" is borrowed from Rancy.
10. For Burke tragedy is one source of the Sublime. See the *Enquiry*, Pt 1, section XV "Of the effects of Tragedy." Accordingly the Gothic and the Tragic should not be dissociated, 43-45.
11. Scott classifies Gothic ingredients in the three groups above-mentioned. The first group has to do with the occult (sorcery, nightmares, hallucinations, portents, curses and spells), the second with the macabre (graves, corpses, funerals, exhumations), and the third with the incongruous (abnormality, mental imbalance, distortion, disfigurement, hideousness). The

- grotesque is also dealt with in Part 3 of Burke's *Enquiry*, as he discusses the opposite of beauty: "ugliness . . . united with such qualities as excite a strong terror" (section 21, 119).
12. Morel coined the concept of "degeneration" and was the first to articulate a full-blown theory of heredity. About Hardy's interest in the theories of degeneracy of the psychiatrist Dr. Henry Maudsley see Dale 207. For Maudsley women's intellectual aspirations, because they thwarted the reproductive function, could only lead to a monstrous androgyny and ultimately to the extinction of the race.
 13. About the equation of blood and semen, see Warwick, who contends that "the equation of blood and semen underpins the discourse of degeneration" (212).
 14. Such Dionysian excess is at the core of the deconstructionist use of the word "dissemination": the "spilling" of meaning, the excess of meaning which is inherent in the use of all language. See Derrida.
 15. Studying onomastic violence in *Tess*, Lecercle recalls the theory of the violence inherent in proper names propounded in Jacques Derrida, *De la Grammatologie* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1967). Lecercle associates linguistic violence with corruption. He never sees it as a source of sublimity. See also Lecercle, *The Violence of Language*.
 16. In Part 2 of his *Enquiry* Burke gives the example of Stonehenge as an illustration of "Difficulty" as a source of sublimity: "those rude masses of stone, set on end, and piled each on other, turn the mind on the immense force necessary for such a work" (section 12, 71).
 17. Poe uses the expression "collocation of stones" to describe the house of his famous Gothic tale, "the Fall of the House of Usher."
 18. See Proust, 454-45. One of the main characters, Marcel, praises Hardy's "géométrie du tailleur de pierres" to Albertine.
 19. In the concluding chapter to his provocative study, Maynard contends that in *Jude* Hardy disassembles sexuality and religion, which are both cultural constructions whose artificiality Hardy exposes.
 20. When Arabella sees Sue and Jude at the Agricultural Show she says to herself that they are "like two children" (364; V; ch. 5).
 21. Green's quotation is from Maudsley.
 22. See 428; VI; ch. 3: "it was damnably selfish to torture you as I did my other friend" and 429: "it began in the selfish and cruel wish to make your heart ache for me without letting mine ache for you." Also see 231; III; ch. 7, about Jude's suspicions when Sue asks him to give her away to Phillotson: "Or was Sue simply so perverse that she wilfully gave herself and him pain for the odd and mournful luxury of practising long-suffering in her own person, and of being touched with tender pity for him at having made him practise it?" Also see 410; VI; ch. 2, Sue's reaction when she reads Little Father Time's note: "At sight of this Sue's nerves utterly gave way, an awful conviction that her discourse with the boy had been the main cause of the tragedy, throwing her into a convulsive agony which knew no abatement."
 23. The word is borrowed from Bakhtin's essay *The Dialogic Imagination*. Introduced in the chapter "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse," the word is coined to describe the subversive effect of the element of carnival in literature.

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