The Disruptive Semiotic:
A Kristevan Reading of Thomas Hardy's Fiction

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ABSTRACT

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Avhandlingen analyserar Thomas Hardys romaner med syfte att utröna varför de oftast väcker en känsla av ambivalens i läsaren. Med utgångspunkt ifrån Julia Kristevas teori om det semiotiska, enligt vilken intertextualitet uppstår genom en transposition av diskurser som har sin grund i primärprocesserna, åskådliggör avhandlingen hur intertextualiteten i Hardys berättarteknik bidrar till att skapa ambivalens. Intertextualiteten i Hardys fiktion utforskas här som härledande av de idéer Hardy tycks ha fängslats av under sina studier då man finner dem i hans anteckningar. Tesen vidgar diskussionen om Kristevas teori om intertextualitet i samband med Hardys fiktion genom att inkludera Jacques Lacans teori om driftprocessens dynamik och lusten. Genom att uppmärksamma en korrespondens mellan idéer i Hardys romaner och de grundläggande principerna i Kristevas och Lacans teorier, används Kristevas dynamiska syn på intertextualitet som process, ett frånstötande (abjektion) för att förklara denna korrespondens av idéer. Då Kristevas föreställning om intertextualitet anknyter till hennes syn på subjektets process, stödjer tesen hennes dynamiska syn på betydelseprocessen. Således pekas intertextuella knutpunkter ut som bevis på frånstötningsprocessen som skapar textambivalens.

Avhandlingen använder sig av Roland Barthes fria associationsteknik för att få fram den flerlagrade dimensionen av Hardys text. Den fria associationstekniken avgränsas däremot till att tolka undertexten som återför till Hardys anteckningar men även till hans innersta väsen, i den bemärkelse att tesen stödjer synen på subjektets process. Även om avhandlingen i huvudsak är psykoanalytisk är den inte det i strängt freudiansk bemärkelse. Med hänvisning till Hardys motstånd till Realismen till förmån för "inspirerad Konst" stödjer tesen synen på Hardy som konstnärligt lagd genom att lyfta fram indicier som tyder på Jagets frånstötningsprocess i Hardys romaner. Avhandlingen tolkar således Thomas Hardys romaner utefter de olika sätt den dynamiska betydelseprocessen tar sig uttryck för att skapa skiftande innebörder.

Keywords *abjection Chora ex-sistence intertextuality maternal jouissance (m)Other palimpsest phallic function signifiance*

CONTENTS

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> "what are called advanced [thoughts] are really in great part but the latest fashion in definition – a more accurate expression by words in *logy* and *ism*, of sensations which men and women have vaguely grasped for centuries" (Hardy *Tess* 1891, 180).

General introduction

Thomas Hardy's fiction and especially his female characters have always provoked and continue to provoke critics and readers alike (Mitchell *Ashgate* 2010, 305-309). Often accused of misogyny for his relating of the tragic outcomes of rebellious and aspiring women[1], Hardy has also been praised by feminists, perhaps more than any male author in English literature (Look 1992, 126). Accordingly, feminist critics have observed an ambivalence and a radicalism in Hardy's portrayal of women (Elvy *Sexing* 2007, 24, 25; Thomas *Conceptions of the Self* 2013). Like an intrusive camera, Hardy's narrative voice renders suggestive close-ups of the heroines' physical features while often leaving out any mention of their inner life or thoughts (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 136, 156, 172)[2]. In this manner, he creates an air of mystery around his heroines, thereby making them at once fascinate and repel the reader. In this they provoke reactions reminiscent of what Kristeva refers to as the abject, which refers to an ambiguous feeling of attraction mixed with fear of what appears to be a threat to structure and order, and therefore to one's very sense of identity. This affective abjective reaction arises from an awakening of the memory of the repressed, pre-linguistic state of the maternal, which creates a longing for its extreme pleasure mixed with the fear of losing oneself in it. Yet, in literature and art, the abject produces the positive effect of poetic catharsis, for there the threat of the abject is sublimated within the structure of the Symbolic order. Thus, the fear of the disruptive potential of the abject is exorcised through artistic practice, whereby the free flow of its force is represented as being withheld within the ordering structure of a work of art (Wyschogrod Ethical 2003, 122-125). Thus, exploring the ambivalence in Hardy's fiction with a focus on its suggestive narrative effects opens up to less emotionally charged, condemnatory interpretations than generally tend to color the exploration of Hardy's

[1] The essays by Penny Boumehla, Linda Shires and Dale Kramer in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy.* Ed. Dale Kramer (2010). See also Anita Sandlin, *Fear and Fascination: A Study of Thomas Hardy and The New Woman*, (Georgia Southern U. 2011) *Electronic Theses and Dissertations* 184.
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[2] Penny Boumehla, "The patriarchy of class: *Under the Greenwood Tree, Far from the Madding Crowd, The Woodlanders,*" *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy.* Ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999) 136-144. Linda Shires, "The radical aesthetic of Tess and the D'Urbervilles," *The Cambridge Companion* (1999) 145-163.

novels (Kramer Cambridge 1999, 76)[3]. As Hardy responded when criticized for his unconvincing character portrayals, realism was never his intention (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 73-76).

Evidently not sharing the ideal of the realistic novel of his epoch, therefore, Hardy's opinion on the writing of fiction as artistic expression. as we shall see, aligns well with Kristeva's view of literary language, referred to by her as "novelistic discourse", or even, in her early analyses, as "poetic language"[4]. Reading Hardy's novels in the light of Kristeva's theory of the semiotic can thus contribute to expanding the frame of reference ordinarily used for analyzing Hardy's fiction. In other words, the context of Kristeva's theory puts Hardy's by and large severely criticized style of writing in a favorable light by enabling an exploration of the distinct quality which sets Hardy's novels apart from others of his time. As mentioned above, Kristeva's theory may provide an understanding of the processes in Hardy's fiction which tend to cause a stir in his readers even in our day.

Aim and method: The theoretical frameworks

In view of Hardy's expressed and persistent defiance of the realist mode in defense of inspirational writing instead, the theoretical framework and literary analyses of Julia Kristeva offer a new outlook on Thomas Hardy's idiosyncratic style. As we have seen, to analyze Hardy's fiction in the perspective of Kristeva's theory encourages a deeper level of reading to understand the ambiguous fascination his novels still hold for present-day readers. Initially, however, the aim of my thesis was to use the part of Kristeva's semiotic theory of intertextuality resulting from a 'transposition' of discourses primarily to determine the nature of a correspondence between ideas from her theory with those I had found detectable in Hardy's fiction. Delving deeper into Hardy's authorship and the ideas of his reading thus enabled me to notice how passages of narrative ambiguity in his novels form intertextual nodes, implicitly conveying the ideas of his reading revealed through his annotations, jottings and quotations that caught his interest or affected him in some way. In other words, the original aim of my thesis was to demonstrate the presence in Hardy's fiction of passages which form veritable intertextual nodes of an underlying topical content interpretable in the present-day terms of Kristeva and, as we shall also see, of Lacan's semiotic theories.

[3] Peter Widdowson, "Hardy and critical theory," *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy.* Ed. Kramer (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999) 73-92.
[4] Leon Roudiez "Introduction," Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art.* Trans.Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and L. Roudiez. Ed. L. Roudiez. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982) 1-5.

During my research, however, I came to realize the extent to which Kristeva's conception of intertextuality is inextricably linked to her view of the split subject in language, referred to by her as "the subject in process" (*Revolution* 1984, 17, 60, 126, 162; *Desire* 1982, 15)[5]. By maintaining the relevance of Kristeva's view of intertextuality to this project, therefore, I have, in effect, come to endorse her theory of "the subject in process" with all its implications in this context. Reading Hardy's fiction from the perspective of Kristeva's theory, that is, undeniably calls for the inner being of the author to be taken into account. Nevertheless, the objective of my study is not a psychoanalysis of Hardy's writing in the traditional, Freudian sense. As we shall see, my reading is rather oriented towards studying Hardy's inner self in his fiction insofar as it can be understood to reveal itself in terms of Kristeva's psychoanalytic theory as a 'semiotic discharge of the drives' disrupting the uniform meaning of his text. Accordingly, the intertextual nodes mentioned above are evidence of such a 'semiotic discharge', giving rise to the ambiguity of abjection, or, as Kristeva expresses it in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1982), "Abjection is above all ambiguity. Because, while releasing a hold, it does not radically cut off the subject from what threatens it" (4).

With regard to the above, the fact that intertextuality is a relevant facet of this study requires an exploration of Hardy's reading, the main source of which is the collection of notes and quotations in his *Notebooks.* Hardy was apparently an eclectic reader with a wide range of interests so that, while his *Notebooks* certainly reveal the scope of his reading, as Robert Schweik avers in his essay "The influence of religion, science and philosophy on Hardy's writing" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 54-72), it is nevertheless difficult to assess the extent of its effect on him and certainly not to determine what his influences were.[6] In line with this, Schweik observes that Hardy's notes display a wide spectrum of ideas and views which have been taken down in a very unsystematic way (Kramer 1999, 54).

However, with focus on Hardy's reading and notes on aesthetics, in his essay "Art and aesthetics" Norman Page calls attention to Hardy's predilection for poetry, which has left its mark in his fiction, making it intermittently

[5] Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language.* Trans. Margaret Waller. Ed. and Introduction S. Roudiez. (New York: Columbia UP, 1984) 17, 126. The subject in process is from the French 'en procès', which has a legal meaning (legal suit), and a meaning of a "forward motion possibly accompanied by transformations". Because the subject in process undergoes a constant "unsettling" movement, its identity and place within the semiotic or symbolic disposition is questionable.

[6] Robert Schweik, "The influence of religion, science, and philosophy on Hardy's writing," 1999, in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge UP, 1999) 54-72. "[Hardy was] usually skeptical and hesitant to embrace wholeheartedly any of the various systems of ideas current in his day." 54.

poetic (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 49). Like Schweik, Page nonetheless lays emphasis on Hardy's being entirely self-educated, while moreover underlining his "highly personal culture" and "intellectual openness" (Kramer 1999, 42), describing him as "a lifelong reader". As Page perceives it, therefore, with Hardy's rather hazy view of "inspired Art", supported by the diffusely formulated precepts of an "individual mode of regard" and "a highly personalized vision", he never developed a coherent aesthetics of his own (Kramer 1999, 41-45).Viewed in the context of this project, however, Hardy's 'vaguely formulated' aesthetics and his views and reading on art and creativity will be demonstrated to have left their impression on his writing of fiction in more ways than one. Nevertheless, it needs to be stressed that such underlying views of artistic production, although detected in Hardy's texts, are not understood in this project to have been consciously articulated by him. Comparing well with the psychoanalytic semiotic theory formulated by Kristeva and, as we shall also see, by Lacan, that is, evidence of such views will rather be considered in the light of these theories as traces of the unconscious signifying process intermittently exhibiting itself in the narrative of Hardy's fiction to reveal the ideas encountered in his reading, whether consciously or unconsciously endorsed by him.

As previously mentioned, according to Kristeva, intertextuality springs from a 'semiotic discharge of the drives' which disrupts the uniform meaning of a text. Intertextuality is thus revelatory of the process of meaning-making which evidences the author as a 'subject in process' in his/her text. Moreover, the ambiguity of meaning arising from intertextuality is revelatory of the transformative, energizing process of abjection of the 'I' of the author. As noted in the above, Kristeva's view of literary language, referred to by her in her earlier analyses as "poetic language" in prose, aligns well with Hardy's anti-realist perception of his writing as "inspired Art". Admittedly, Hardy's style of writing in his novels exhibits the creative talent of an artist. In this regard, it is germane to analyze his form of prose in terms of Kristeva's theory, according to which it is suggestive of the process of 'abjection' which feeds all creative activity. As we shall see, therefore, it is in the sense of an elusive presence within his text that Hardy's inner self will be considered in this study.

All the same, my reading of Hardy's novels is essentially intertextual, in that, as we have seen, it principally revolves around the question of a detectable subtext conveying a theoretical framework that is recognizably that of the texts of Hardy's reading. Thus, rather than focusing on interpreting the manifest plot-oriented meaning, I will analyze what Hardy's novels convey through the interstices of their text. Such an essentially text-oriented analysis based on Kristeva's theory, as noted above, not only has the further im-

plications of taking the inner self of the author into account but also, as we shall see, his social context. Moreover, in view of Kristeva's dynamic view of intertextuality as the traces of the process of abjection and as effectuated through a transposition of discourses, it is taken to explain the correspondence of ideas between Hardy's fiction and the basic tenets of Kristeva's theory here argued for.

In line with Roland Barthes' approach of collaborative reading, therefore, Hardy's writing is viewed as a 'layered tapestry' of plural meaning that can be interpreted through the technique of free association produced by the text, without consideration of authorial intent. The 'opening out' of the text to produce it, however, is here delimited to interpreting Hardy's writing through the lens of the subtext of his reading. Additionally, as opposed to a purely Barthian collaborative approach, this reading restores the author to the text into which he is taken to be inscribed.

With reference to Hardy's anti-realist stand in defense of "inspired Art", as previously mentioned, my study of his fiction endorses the view of him as creatively inclined. Considering his writing in the light of Kristeva's theory of the subject in process, therefore, the passages highlighted for their subtext and ambiguity of meaning, suggestive of the energizing process of abjection of the 'I' of the author, will also be interpreted as the signs of moments of authorial sublimation. As we shall see, self-reflective, palimpsestic and pictorial passages can be interpreted as evidencing such moments, revelatory of the semiotic disruption of the uniform meaning of the text.

Furthermore, Hardy's modest rural social background and lack of university education will be considered, in the light of Kristeva's psychoanalytical semiotic theory, to have contributed to his poetic style of prose. As will be shown, these biographical facts are relevant to the context when associated with Hardy's desire to remain true to himself while striving for the recognition of the middle-class intellectuals whose values he admittedly did not share. The above-mentioned facts of Hardy's life are thus taken as being of interest to this project in relation to the prohibitive social climate of his time, with its harsh demands of censorship. For, evidently giving rise to contradictory impulses in Hardy, they can be seen to have left traces of the process of abjection in his writing.

Additionally, considering the social dimension of Kristeva's theory of the semiotic as a disruptive process of abjection, which makes itself felt in both language and society, Hardy's living in an epoch of rapid social transformation is of great significance in the context of this project. According to Kristeva, epochs of rapid social transformation disorient the subject's sense of belonging within the Symbolic order, especially that of the subject whose identity is already precariously anchored within the Symbolic. Such epochs

are thus reflected in literature. As Kristeva explains in *Desire in Language*, "poetic language in its most disruptive form […] shows the constraints of a civilisation dominated by transcendental rationality […] it is coupled with crises of social institutions (state, family, religion), and, more profoundly a turning point in the relationship of man to meaning" (1982, 140).

Exploring the intertextuality of Hardy's fiction from the outset of Kristeva's psychoanalytical semiotic theory, as we have seen, involves a 'collaborative' reading of free association in line with Barthe's 'opening out' the text, "without the guarantee of its author – 'its father'".[7] As opposed to Barthe's 'production of the text', however, this active reading is nevertheless restrained by the assumption that the author has left a mark in the subtext of his writing. As we have argued above, when explored in terms of Kristeva's view of intertextuality, Hardy's fiction is held to reveal the mark of a transposition of discourses with all its implications of the subject in process. As previously mentioned, based on the material evidence of Hardy's reading, available in the form of his annotations, notebooks and letters preserved by the recipients[8], the ideas here hypothesized to have especially captivated Hardy align well with the basic tenets of the psychoanalytical semiotic theory of Kristeva. Moreover, from the outset of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, a detectable correspondence of ideas with Lacan's theory makes some of its precepts equally germane to this thesis, as we shall see. Interconnecting past and present, therefore, my approach is an interactive reading focusing on passages in Hardy's novels containing possible textual crossroads. By freely associating and blending the ideas of the past with those of the present-day theories mentioned, I seek to illustrate the mechanism of a transposition of discourses in the textual practice of my thesis, in support of the view of the timeless quality of Hardy's novels.

In consideration of the above, therefore, I have focused on the ideas of Thomas Hardy's reading relevant to this context. That is to say, rather than concentrate on arguing for the higher intertextual prevalence of the ideas of a certain philosopher, text or school of thought in Hardy's fiction, I use Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) in a more fluid manner[9]. In other

[7] Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," in *Image Music Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977) 161.

[8] Michael Millgate, "Thomas Hardy: The Biographical sources," in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy.* Ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge UP: Cambridge, 1999) 1-18. Negative experiences with interviewers determined Hardy to "protect his posthumous privacy by any means available" 3.

[9] Peter Widdowson, "Hardy and critical theory," in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy.* Ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge UP: Cambridge, 1999) 73-92. Though Hillis Miller's seminal, intertextual analysis of Hardy's novels *Distance and Desire* (Cambridge: Massinger, 1970) provides a profound intertextual reading of Hardy's fiction, it focuses on tracing links to the notions of Schopenhauer's philosophy.

words, paying attention to the annotations and quotations in them as text, I have noted possible correspondences between their medley of concepts, ideas, views and perceptions and those exhibited in the subtext of Hardy's novels. As will be demonstrated, these correspondences form veritable intertextual nodes in Hardy's fictional text, suggestive of a deeper surplus sense which contributes another dimension to its reading. Such a surplus sense is thus held to correspond to the texts of Hardy's reading, expressing views and notions on the intrinsic rebelliousness of the creatively inclined, on the split nature of the subject in yearning for the indefinable, on the paternal dimension of language as prohibitive, inhibitory and even as a tool for oppression, on the social conditions of woman in a patriarchal society, and on woman as indefinable and essentially unknowable within the paternal social order.

In the above-mentioned forms of authorial sublimation in Hardy's novels which will be focused on in this project, the reference to 'pictorial passages' needs further explaining. Frequently characterized by critics as 'pictorial', this distinctive quality of Hardy's fiction, however, is at times given special attention in the intellectual circles as a stigma. As Norman Page observes in his essay 'Art and Aesthetics', Hardy evidently had a pictorial or visualizing form of imagination, as he appears to have worked by sketching the scenes of his novels before portraying them in writing.[10] Our computerized, commercialized era with its growing penchant for pictorial images at the cost of the verbal, however, has generated a renewed interest in studying what has been termed 'narrative pictorialism' within the recently developed field of intermediality. Accordingly, Emma Tornborg presents an essentially linguistic perspective on narrative pictorialism in her thesis *What Literature Can Make Us See* (2014), in which she demonstrates how certain grammatical and structural properties generate visual mental images in the reader (75, 88). Interestingly, as Tornborg informs us when explaining her basic terminology of Ancient Greek origin, her research is based on an area of interest originating from the Ancient Greeks of late antiquity. For example, the term *ekphrasis* in Tornborg's thesis is an Ancient Greek term referring to a verbal representation of a visual representation in poetry or literature. Clearly, Tornborg's research on the phenomenon of ekphrasis is of interest in the context of this project insofar as it concerns investigating the diegetic marks of a text permeated with underlying ideas, thoughts or notions, that are important to consider for a full understanding of it (45-54). Moreover, inasmuch as ekphrasis was a fully established literary genre in the era of the

[10] Norman Page, "Art and Aesthetics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy.* Ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999) 38-53.

Romantics, as Tornborg notes (47), Hardy must have been familiar with the phenomenon. The term 'iconic projection' which is used in this project is thus borrowed from Tornborg as a suitable term for analyzing the diegetic marks of the passages of narrative pictorialism in Hardy's fiction. As we shall see, with narrative pictorialism being an important part of this study, the term 'iconic projection' is sometimes preferred to 'metaphor' to stress the pictorial aspect of the transmission of a subtext. At times, the term 'iconic projection' is thus used when exploring the appearances of the sense of abjection in Hardy's text.

As previously stated, Hardy considered himself first and foremost a poet, so that he did not share the ideal of verisimilitude of the literary critics and fellow novelists of his epoch. On the contrary, he held the opinion that a literary text of quality was recognized by its connotative force or 'poetic intensity'. In Hardy's view, it seems that a literary text of quality should be recognized by its power to inspire varying levels of interpretation, to engender associations of ideas or metaphorical thinking of signifying processes beyond the denotative meaning. Described by Norman Page in his essay "Art and Aesthetics" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 38-53), Hardy was "the inheritor of the Romantic convictions about the supremacy of verse" (49). As Hardy himself reflects at the beginning of 1886: "My art is to intensify the expression of things as is done by Crivelli, Bellini (painters of the Italian Renaissance, & C,) so that the heart and inner meaning is made vividly visible" (Kramer 1999, 44). In this regard, as we shall see, the psychoanalytic semiotic theories of Julia Kristeva and Jacques Lacan prove useful analytical tools to probe into the hidden layers of intertextuality in Hardy's novels in a writerly close reading, as one reads poetry.

Accordingly, as will be further explained in the section 'Choice of novels', three of Thomas Hardy's earliest and three of his later published novels were selected for this project to study them in terms of Kristeva and Lacan's theories as signifying processes, without consideration of authorial intent. This reading of Hardy's novels will however delimit their multiple levels of meaning and their semiotic polyvalence to focus on the transposition of Thomas Hardy's reading on psychological and socio-philosophical theories, including those on language and creativity. Explored as a subtext of Hardy's text[11], this plural network of the texts of his reading will then be blended with the theoretical discourses of Lacan and Kristeva. The timeless quality of Hardy's novels will thus be made apparent through a transposition of the 19th century sign schemes into the current ones of Kristeva and Lacan. As

[11] Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text*, (London; Fontana Press, 1977) 154-164. To consider Hardy's fiction as "a *stereographic plurality* of its weave of signifiers" to be read actively, "gather[ing] it up as play", "without the guarantee of its father" – its author.

mentioned above, the intertextuality and subtext in Hardy's novels are held to be unintentional, as a form of unconscious communication, revelatory of the dynamics of the signifying process.

As previously discussed, while this analysis of Hardy's fiction is premised on the psychoanalytical theories of language and subjectivity of Kristeva and Lacan, Kristeva's theory of the semiotic and of intertextuality as a process of transposition of discourses is highlighted owing to its implications of the transformative potential of the semiotic on the Symbolic. As we shall see, like the implications of Hardy's novels, those of Kristeva's theory of the subject in process point to the possibility of social improvement in the long term.[12] With both Kristeva and Lacan's theories being psychoanalytical, however, their perspectives on self-alienation, narcissism and the driving force of desire in life are of equal importance in this study. Some passages in Hardy's novels, however, call for an additional, strictly Lacanian approach for their further implications of the return of the repressed. Alluded to here is Lacan's view of Woman as non-existent within the phallic structure, whose existence depends on its repression of the maternal. With less focus than Kristeva on the repressed, unspeakable maternal as a potentially transformative force on the symbolic, the Lacanian viewpoint is better suited to a deeper understanding of the characteristic anticlimactic romances of Hardy. Thus, with Lacan's view that, within the paternal realm, "there is no signifier for, or essence of Woman as such" (Fink 1997, 115; Lacan *Encore* 1999, 32-35, 57-58), woman becomes the radically Other. As the radically Other, woman embodies the 'Other jouissance', which is asexual in Lacan's theoretical approach, because it is 'outside' the phallic system (Fink 1997, 120). In other words, the Other jouissance is "a form of sublimation through love that provides full satisfaction of the drives" (120) beyond the phallic sexual. Moreover, with Lacan's view of the impossible sexual relationship, because its impulse derives from desire for the 'Forbidden object', the Mother, his theorem of the dynamics of desire, as we shall see, is highly applicable as a complement to an understanding of Hardy's novels in terms of Kristeva's theory.

To my knowledge, an approach to Hardy's fiction in terms of an unconscious writing, revelatory of the dynamics of the signifying process as explicated by the theories of Kristeva and Lacan, has not yet been made. This approach will contribute to the field of research seeking to explore the narrative of Hardy's fiction to understand the dynamic process of its productions of meaning.

[12] Julia Kristeva, "Women's Time," in *The Kristeva Reader*. Ed. Toril Moi (London: Basil Blackwell, 1986) 187-213.

Previous research

That Hardy was an autodidact is, of course, generally known and ascribed a significant amount of attention by many Hardy scholars[13] devoted to tracing potential influences on his worldview and fiction. As Norman Page observes, however, the range of Hardy's culture is exceptional in its "open-mindedness" and apparent indifference to hierarchies and canons (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 44). According to Page, in other words, Hardy was a "lifelong reader", interested in all kinds of knowledge, from philosophy, theology, ethics and science to unusual, bizarre or "curious" facts from a variety of sources (44). While there has been an abundance of research on the challenging issue of determining the influences on Hardy, there is also plentiful research exploring and attempting to explain Hardy's idiosyncratic style, language and narrative technique in terms of intentionality. In this regard, Suzanne Keen's *Thomas Hardy's Brains: Psychology, Neurology, and Hardy's Imagination* (2014) exemplifies all the above-mentioned approaches to Hardy's work. While Keen's focus on certain aspects in Hardy's novels, such as the window scenes, the flattening out of certain characters, their misinterpretations, misunderstandings and incomplete self-understanding, to name but a few, to a certain extent resembles mine, Keen's claim that Hardy was fully aware of the narrative techniques she maintains he used to produce certain effects with his writing, however, sets our work apart.

There are, of course, other areas of Hardy research based on social science, genus, genre or postmodern theory, or on psychoanalytical theory of a Freudian or Lacanian kind. For example, *The Cambridge Companion on Thomas Hardy* (1999), edited by Dale Kramer, and *The Ashgate Research Companion to Thomas Hardy* (2010), edited by Rosemary Morgan, provide an excellent overview of the various areas, mapping the terrain of Hardy research. Though I have found readings of Hardy's fiction which draw on similar impressions or observations to my own, nevertheless, their interpretations are divergent from mine insofar as their theoretical perspectives are different. To my knowledge, there has been no study of Hardy's fiction analyzed in the light of Kristeva's semiotic theory of intertextuality and the transposition of discourses, in which some aspects of Lacan's psychoanalytic approach are also included.

However, relevant references to the theoretical frameworks of Kristeva and Lacan are found in the overview of studies on Hardy's novels by Margaret Elvy in *Sexing Hardy: Thomas Hardy and Feminism* (2007). As the title indicates, however, the perspective is entirely feminist, dealing with desire,

[13] *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge UP: Cambridge, 1999); see also *The Ashgate Research Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Rosemary Morgan (St. Andrew University, UK: Ashgate, 2010).

love, and identity in patriarchal society, so that both Kristeva and Lacan are used in a rather sketchy manner in support of the feminist cause.

A more traditional socio-historical feminist approach to Hardy's fiction is *The Feminist Sensibility in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (2005) by Manjit Kaur, in which Kaur argues for the view that Thomas Hardy's novels convey his deep sympathy for women in their struggle for self-fulfillment in the Victorian patriarchy. Accordingly, Kaur claims that fear of censorship and of being called a propagandist prevented Hardy from portraying women as he would have liked. Kaur gives an historical background to the development of feminism in England, and to the 19th century socio-cultural trends, including the impact of the New Woman movement on the cultural climate. Seeking to understand why Hardy's fiction, harshly criticized by many critics for its misogyny, nevertheless seems to appeal to the feminist sensibility, Manjit Kaur concludes that especially Hardy's later women characters are delineated in such a manner as to be supportive of certain feminist beliefs.

On the other hand, though not belonging in any respect to the psychoanalytic school of thought, Hillis Miller's intertextual analysis, *Distance and Desire* (1970), has been inspirational for this project. Even so, Miller's study of the strong effects of intertextuality in Hardy's fiction lays emphasis on demonstrating how these primarily reveal Hardy's predilection for the philosophy of Schopenhauer. In contrast with the more open-ended use of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality which forms the basis of this study, therefore, Miller's is predominantly source oriented, seeking to exhibit the traces of Schopenhauer's influence on Hardy in his novels. Miller thus propounds an idea of desire, as effected by the intertextuality of Hardy's fiction, as being an essentially spiritual experience, sought for its own sake rather than for its consummation in a love relationship. As previously mentioned, the idea of distance enhancing desire as that of the impossible sexual relationship is also at the basis of my project, though it is used in the context of a psychoanalytic semiotic analysis.

Other inspirational Hardy studies are *The Expressive Eye. Fiction and Perception in the Work of Thomas Hardy* (1986) by J. B Bullen, *The Return of the Repressed* (1972) by Perry Miesel, and *The Novels of Thomas Hardy. Illusion and Reality* (1974) by Penelope Vigar, which have all encouraged me in one way or another to explore further interpretive strategies for deriving significance from the 'pictorialism' in Hardy's novels. These critics have emboldened me in my reading to delve into the significance of certain detectable patterns and to note parallels which I might otherwise have overlooked.

A more in-depth study of Hardy's novels which pertains to the line of argument of my project is *Patriarchy and its Discontents* (2003) by Joanna Deveureux. Hers is a study of Victorian patriarchal values in Hardy's fiction, exploring how the class structures of Victorian patriarchy are revealed as affecting male protagonists in Hardy's novels. Hence, Deveureux is led to study Hardy's delineation of women and femininity as the patriarchal point of view inevitably takes precedence over the feminine. Hardy's novels are shown both to expose and attack the limited patriarchal perspective with his delineation of strong female protagonists refusing to conform. Much of what is taken up in this study of patriarchy, desire and women's interiorization of the masculine discourse in Hardy's novels is interpretable in both Kristeva and Lacan's terms. By way of contrast, Deveureux explores these issues at a plot and character level with an emphasis on authorial intention.

Hardy's Fables of Integrity: Woman, Body, Text (1991) by Marjorie Garson also focuses on social structures, patriarchy and sexual politics in an analysis of masculinity and Hardy's portrayal of male characters. Her work also includes a study of Hardy's narrative technique in *Under the Greenwood Tree,* where the narrator and character perspectives impinge on each other to destabilize meaning, so that the perspective offered by the text is made at least dual. Yet Garson argues that a longing for a lost classical golden age appears as a regular motif in the text, to form a rhythm patterned with notions of dissolution and repair. To a certain degree Garson's perspective is implicitly Lacanian, mainly in her analysis of the contrasting modes of description of the male and female characters as subject versus object, with the latter existing only in relation to the former.

Barbara Schapiro, on the other hand, explicitly uses psychoanalytic theory to explore the depiction of love in Thomas Hardy's novels. In *Psychoanalysis and Romantic Idealization: The Dialectic of Love in Hardy's 'Far from the Madding Crowd'* (2002), she studies both the imagery and the narrative perspective in the portrayal of romantic desire. She adheres to the relational school of psychoanalysis, according to which it is both healthy and necessary to maintain contact with primary narcissism in adulthood to enhance creativity and emotional fulfillment. Yet in line with Kristeva's view of the need for a balance between the two forces of the semiotic and the symbolic in her theory, in the relational school of psychoanalysis illusion and reality must be held in a "subtle dialectical balance to be constructive" (16). Schapiro thus studies the motif of desire and extreme idealization in Hardy's novels, viewed with a perspective on Hardy's early childhood, focusing on his close emotional bond with his mother and his tendency for such idealization in his relationships with women. Like Lacan and Kristeva, Schapiro supposes that creative imagination stems from a mother fixa-

tion. To some extent, Schapiro's study relates to mine with her focus on the imagery, narrative voice, narcissist fantasy and desire. However, her study is essentially a relational character analysis, dealing with the implications of love as it is ordinarily defined in patriarchal society. In another article, "Love's Shadow: The Unconscious Underside of Romance in Hardy's *The Woodlanders"* (2014), Schapiro explores the theme of romantic passion in terms of aggression.

In *Thomas Hardy and Desire: Conceptions of the Self* (2013), Jane Thomas both explains and applies central Lacanian ideas to Hardy's poems and novels. She describes Hardy as 'anticipating' Lacan, maintaining that he is Lacanian 'avant la lettre'. Yet, arguing as if Hardy were in full command of his writing, Thomas does not explore the text in terms of its unconscious. However, utilizing the Lacanian idea of the self as constrained in the Symbolic Other, when studying Hardy's portrayal of the situation of woman in his novels, Jane Thomas displays how the patriarchal oppression of female desire is symbolically conveyed. Hence, she argues that women, being driven by desire to escape patriarchal constraint, are shown to create an alternative Sapphic space of being; according to Jane Thomas this is a space of close female companionship.

Interpreted more thoroughly in the terms of Lacan's theory, however, Hardy's near obsession with the mysteries of sexual attraction (76) in his novels is understood by Jane Thomas as revelatory of the impossible sexual relationship, and the 'double alienation' of woman and her desire in patriarchy. The occurrence of cross-dressing in Hardy's fiction is accordingly taken to be a highly symbolic means for Hardy to address the issue of woman's desire. Less Lacanian at times, however, Jane Thomas also studies the phenomenon of 'aspirational desire' in Hardy's texts, where the woman becomes the embodiment of male desire for social advancement.

In her close reading of Hardy's elegiac poems, however, Jane Thomas highlights the Lacanian moments of authorial surprise, or discovery. Viewing these moments as signs of transgressive jouissance, Thomas delves into the unconscious of the poems, analyzing them in terms of their manifestation of a lack

While, as we have seen, to my knowledge Julia Kristeva's theory has not been used consistently in literary studies of Hardy's fiction, in depth readings of his work through the lens of Lacan's psychanalytic theory are more commonly found. In addition to the exclusively Lacanian analyses of Hardy's work by Jane Thomas, there are those of Annie Ramel. Yet the latter's text is very specialized indeed, to the extent that using the psychoanalytic style of Lacan, Ramel's reading of Hardy's text narrows it down to an exclusively psychoanalytic Lacanian context. Interesting recent essays

in psychoanalytic and other perspectives on Hardy's work can be found in *FATHOM. a French e-journal of Thomas Hardy studies* (2019).[14]

In contrast to the above, some in-depth reviews discovered during my retrospective research and writing accord well with my focus. An example is Margaret Higonnet's commentary in the introduction to the 1998 Penguin Classics edition of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, in which she cites passages and takes up characteristic features which I have highlighted and discussed in support of my analysis. As we shall see, however, Higonnet's interpretive perspective differs from mine. Yet, commenting on passages revelatory of Hardy's idiosyncratic view of tragedy and comedy as one, as Hardy wrote to Symonds in 1889: "All comedy, is tragedy, if you only look deep enough into it," (xxxi), or on passages with embedded fairy-tale motifs, "rearranged into grotesque inversions of conventional plots" (xxxiii), with narrative tension and ambiguities, Higonnet supports the possibility that such narrative effects "may not have been conscious" (xxxiii). Hence, in line with my view, Higonnet suggests that the inconsistencies in the portrayal of Tess implicitly convey an unconscious questioning of the ideological bases of the novel's expressed views on womanhood (xxiii).

Richard Nemesvari's chapter "'I love you better than any man can'": Sensation Fiction, Class, and Gender Role Anxiety in *Desperate Remedies"*, in his study, *Thomas Hardy, Sensationalism, and the Melodramatic Mode* (2011), is another in-depth analysis which I discovered in retrospect notices the same passages I exemplify in my project. Nemesvari, however, comments on these passages in a different light. While he argues for possible unconscious narrative currents in Hardy's novel, for the most part Nemesvari maintains that Hardy consciously uses the conventions of melodrama as "the cast of unifying propriety and property" (46). Hardy, that is, uses the conventions of melodrama to "cover for the book's darker implications" (47). Nemesvari thus focuses on similar controversial passages to those in my study, with "hints of same-sex erotic attraction", of "gender transgression", and characters depicted with androgynous features (28-9). Moreover, he notices the ambiguity of the "happy ending" (48), which he finds "severely anticlimactic" in *Desperate Remedies,* while arguing that it has clearly been imposed on Hardy, desirous of being published, "at the very start of his writing career" (45). Nevertheless, Nemesvari uses the above-referred to passages in a context markedly different from mine to support his understanding of the novel, which he describes as "Hardy's exploration of the precarious and yet oppressive nature of masculinity" (46).

Considering the enormous amount of research available on Thomas Hardy and his novels, therefore, I cannot claim to have exhausted the range of

[14] Ranell, Annie, https://journals.openedition.org/fathom/ (retrieved July 9, 2019)

critical works taking up similar features for discussion to those in my project. However, to my knowledge there has been no in-depth exploration of Hardy's fiction using the premises of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality as a transposition of discourses in the manner of my project.

Choice of novels

Though the idea for this research developed subsequent to my reading of all of Hardy's novels, I soon came to realize the need to limit the scope of my treatise by focusing on a selection of six. Even so, the novels have been chosen in order to support the claim made in this project of Hardy's general reluctance to accept systematic principles, and of his unwillingness to adhere to any mode of developmental or unified thought. As observed by Linda Shires: "Nowhere in Hardy's writings do we get a fully articulated aesthetic" (Kramer Cambridge 1999, 148). Moreover, Hardy's fragmentarily expressed aesthetic of inspired Art as a means of bringing out the "essence" of reality involved his advocacy of subjective criteria for aesthetic judgements (39, 41-2, 47)[15]. As Shires further argues, Hardy's imagination was primarily visual, in that, as he himself described his writing, mental pictures preceded the formulation of ideas in language (148). With Hardy's interest in questions of perception, according to Shires, his great admiration for the art of William Turner is reflected in the aesthetic effects of the so-called "abstract imaginings" which characterize his prose (148). My choice of novels is thus determined especially by their rich ekphrastic content, which, in addition to their heteroglossia and other intriguing characteristic variations of narrative (126-7)[16], makes them excellent examples for bringing out the understanding of the pictorial passages in Hardy's fiction formulated in this project. In this regard, my choice of novels is motivated by the persistence of the patterns discovered across Hardy's oeuvre, from his early novels to the later ones.

In view of the above stated aim and method, therefore, I will analyze Hardy's first three novels, *Desperate Remedies* (1871), *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) and *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873). While critics usually refer to these as his 'minor novels' and seem to study them merely to delve into their 'flaws', Peter Widdowson, in his essay, "Hardy and critical theory", posits that critics tend to overlook the qualities of these novels since they judge them by the standard of the realist mode (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 75).

In agreement with Widdowson's view of Hardy's early novels, therefore, and even more so, perhaps, with how Hardy wished them to be read, as

[15] The essay by Norman Page "Art and aesthetics" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 38-53).
[16] The essay by Jakob Lothe, "Variants on genre: *The Return of the Native, The Mayor of Casterbridge, The hand of Ethelberta*" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 112-129.

impressionist literature (43, 73), this project argues for the literary quality of his 'personal style' with its distinctive narrative techniques, whose artistry evinces "the hidden meaning of things". Yet, as previously reasoned, this need not necessarily mean that Hardy consciously sought to produce such effects; from the perspective of this project, that is, Hardy's narrative techniques are rather considered as consequential to his state of artistic inspiration when writing. Thus, with the focus of this project on apparently disconnected narrative parts that bring into view the patterns of inherent meaning they reveal through their text, the type of reading argued for endorses Linda Shires' call for more unconventional criteria of assessment for Hardy's novels (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 161). In this respect, of the three early so-called minor novels, *Desperate Remedies* (1871) will be explored in greater depth in that it is the novel mostly noticed by reviewers for its flaws (Kramer Cambridge 1999, 76, Keen Hardy's Brains 2014, 8-9, 27).

The other three novels included in this project are *The Return of the Native* (1878), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1896). What these three novels have in common is the severity of the critical response they received, with objections to the sexual relationships they contained, and their shallow character portrayals, which forced Hardy to make extensive revisions to ensure the publication of the novels in serial form. Owing to the extensive revision of Hardy's sixth novel to be published, *The Return of the Native* (1878), which totally transformed the original intended story, it will mostly be considered in this project in relation to its affinities with the above-listed novels. Moreover, Hardy's last novel Jude *the Obscure* (1896), which received such a relentless and vitriolic response on its publication that it made Hardy give up his vocation as a novelist to return to that of a poet, will be very briefly dealt with as it compares with the others in this project. Much noted by critics for its connection to the social context of the New Woman movement, *Jude the Obscure* (1896) sets itself apart from Hardy's other novels. Accordingly, it deserves to be studied in greater depth in a project on its own account. In this project, however, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) will be analyzed more deeply and in greater detail than the previously mentioned novels in that, though notorious for the sexual tension it apparently conveys, it is nevertheless considered to be Hardy's greatest novel. As stated above, however, my selection of novels for this project is based on critics' conviction of their literary qualities beyond the conventions of realism (Jane Thomas 5, 14)[17]; as Hardy expressed it: "Realism is not Art" (Millgate *Life* 1984, 239).

[17] On Hardy's 'anti-realism' see Judith Mitchell, "Hardy and gender," *The Ashgate Research Companion to Thomas Hardy.* Ed. Rosemary Morgan (St Andrews University, UK: Ashgate, 2010) 306.

Censorship and publication

Against the background of the anti-intentionality approach of this project, it may seem contradictory to consider the formative influence of Hardy's family background in his life and how it might have affected his writing; yet Hardy's social intellectual context as an aspiring novelist, as he tried to become an integral part of the urban middle classes, made him feel an outsider on all counts. Failing to achieve a sense of belonging in the urban intellectual world of his ambition, his endeavor to do so had distanced him from the culture of the rural working class he had once belonged to. With Hardy's resultant feeling of 'not belonging' to any of these worlds, the memory of the rural past of his early childhood might have contributed his cultivation of his characteristic radical aesthetics, to the development of his personal convictions and eccentricity in defiance of the accepted criteria for the novel form of his time (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 84; Keen 2014, 58, Elvy 2007, 136; Nemesvari Sensationalism 2011, 9, 11). As Nemesvari maintains Peter Widdowson to have observed, "how radically Hardy's fiction challenges and refutes humanist realism and the whole cultural ideology which informs and sustains it – not only in the 'minor novels' although more explicitly there, but in all the novels." (Nemesvari *Sensationalism* 2011, 21).

In relation to Hardy's feeling of not belonging, it is interesting to note his narrative style, which is often criticized for its inconsistencies, fragmented structure and problematic breaches of decorum. As Norman Page emphasizes, however, Hardy was often reproved for not adhering to the tenets of Victorian realism. As noted above, he had a predilection for an inspired, highly personal mode of writing (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 45). Clearly, Hardy's tendency to nonconformity is pertinent to this project, bearing in mind the requirements for publication style that he was expected to meet. Studied in relation to this, that is, the fragmented irregularity of Hardy's narrative is revelatory of the traces of a silencing within it, giving rise to a text which nevertheless conveys the sense of the censored 'unspeakable' through the interstices of its narrative. The issue of censorship and Hardy's difficulties with getting published are thus relevant when exploring Hardy's distinctive narrative mode. Interpreted within the perspective of Kristeva and Lacan's psychoanalytic semiotics, that is, the Victorian requirements of censorship are of interest in so far as their repressive effect can be seen to explain the connotative force in Hardy's text, communicating the hidden sense of its intertextuality connected to ideas of creativity, art and artistic yearning.

Accordingly, exploring Hardy's ideas on literature and literary style, Norman Page observes Hardy's impatience with the representational style of the Victorian mode of realism, in support of "a highly, even eccentrically, personal vision" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 38). Seeking to understand the

reason for Hardy's nonconformity and insistent challenge to the accepted criteria of smoothness and decorum of the literary critics of his time (45), Page notes the uniqueness of Hardy among English writers "in being both a major poet and a major novelist, and the two territories are often in collaboration rather than competition" (49), so that, as Page explains, "the poems have a strong narrative element" while "the fiction is very often poetic […] in broader conception" (49). Moreover, Page makes special mention of Hardy's reflection on art critics jotted down in his notebook, that "few literary critics discern the solidarity of all the arts" (44). Indeed, as Page maintains, there is ample evidence of Hardy's view that "art should be governed by its own self-sufficient and demanding rules and conventions" (52) Accordingly, asserting his opinion on the issue of realism in his essay "The Science of Fiction" (1891), Hardy asserts his stand against its practitioners' claim that novel-writing is a science. Defending his view of "the Art of story-telling"[18] Hardy thus demonstrates his more egalitarian view of story-telling as a talent people are born with, no matter what their social class or position in society, as he writes:

> Once in a crowd a listener heard a needy and illiterate woman saying of another poor and beggarly woman who had lost her little son years before:
>
> "You can see the ghost of that child in her face even now."
>
> That speaker was one who, though she could neither read nor write, had the true means towards the 'Science' of Fiction innate within her; a power of observation informed by a living heart. Had she been trained in the technicalities, she might have fashioned her view of morality with good effect; a reflection which leads to a conjecture that, perhaps, true novelists, like poets, are born, not made. (Regan 2001, 104)

While Hardy, as Stephen Regan observes in his introduction to the essay, is still admired in our day both as a poet and as a novelist, his aspiration to follow the ideal of inspired art even when writing fiction made him bear the "persistent condescension" of literary critics throughout his career as a novelist (Regan *The Nineteenth Century Novel* 2001, 100-1). Attempting to understand the virulence of feeling that Hardy's novels provoked in his day, Richard Nemesvari, in *Thomas Hardy, Sensationalism, and the Melodramatic Mode* (2011), deems that this is the result of the influence of the sensation novel on Hardy, "in writing his own … version of the genre"

[18] See *The Nineteenth-Century Novel: A Critical Reader.* Ed Stephen Regan (New York: Routledge and The Open University, 2001) 103-117.

(22). Thus, Nemesvari argues for the influence on Hardy's writing of the oral tradition he grew up with and his first-hand experience of life in a region of economic depression, making him aware of how social forces affect people's lives. As noted by Nemesvari, the resultant understanding Hardy developed for people in crisis, trapped in situations of illegality and crime, comes across in his fiction in the mode of melodrama, "constructed as both an 'aesthetic of protest' and a 'culture of resistance'" (9). Accordingly, as Nemesvari concludes, critics saw the dangerous effects of melodrama in Hardy's novels, encouraging "improper identifications" (9). Bearing the stigma of "sensation fiction" in Victorian times, Hardy's fiction thus attracted virulent criticism, as Nemesvari writes, for concentrating on "criminal, unnatural and perverse behavior […] contrary to commonsense experience [thus, his writings] could be dismissed as unbelievable because they were unrealistic" (11). Nevertheless, as we know, Hardy's definition of reality was broader than the restricted view allowed by the aesthetic mode of realism (11). In this respect, therefore, as Nemesvari expresses it, "[Hardy's] novels often contain secrets that are central to the themes of gender and class he explores" (13).

Clearly, with the focus of this project on the effects of repression and conflicting inner forces on Hardy's writing, it is interesting to consider the difficulties Hardy faced, having to handle critical editors when seeking to be published while still maintaining his artistic integrity as an aspiring novelist. In other words, the question of censorship is of relevance when analyzing the characteristic connotative force and ambiguity of Hardy's narrative, as it can be understood as being indicative of the return of the repressed, the 'unsayable' affecting the enunciated text in Hardy's novels, as in his poetry. Later in life, when Hardy had given up writing novels and returned to poetry, owing to the especially venomous criticism his novels *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1896) had given rise to, surprisingly, he accepted the opportunity of printing all of his novels collected in a unified format, which would result in the *Wessex Novels* edition (1893-1896). As Nemesvari comments, however, although it appears as if Hardy thus finally gave in to the tenets of the mode of realism when agreeing to revise his novels to make their setting consistent and in correspondence with the real world, according to Simon Gatrell, the shaping of the 'Wessex' of the *Wessex Novels* "was profoundly retroactive". Drawing attention to the fact that Wessex is "re-created" in the novels, while stressing that its "original composition had taken place before the concept of Wessex was firm" (18), Nemesvari argues that Hardy's refusal to then take the chance of rewriting his novels, to reconsider his plots, the "structure, story, characterization or theme" (18-19), is an indication of his resistance to the "now status quo

paradigms of realism" (20). As Linda Shires rightly observes, as quoted by Nemesvari, Hardy "does not abandon mimesis completely [but he] undermines the bases of mimetic representation". According to Shires, therefore, "Hardy is fundamentally anti-realistic" (21). As previously discussed, seeing that Hardy was against the view of "fiction with a purpose" (Björk *Psychological Vision* 1987, 77), nevertheless, he believed that an artist should offer a "criticism of life" (70-5) in an "idiosyncratic mode of regard"; Hardy considered, that is, that an artist should give a faithful depiction of life, and not life garniture (Millgate *Life* 1984, 182-3; Pinion *Hardy Companion* 1978, 149; Orel *Personal Writings* 1966, 119)[19].

As is evident from the above, Hardy's experiences with publishers were strenuous from the very beginning of his novel writing career. No doubt marked by the rural culture he grew up in, as Michael Millgate, referred to by Nemesvari, observes, Hardy clearly drew on the elements of the oral tradition of storytelling when writing his fiction (*Sensationalism* 2011, 4). Arguing that Hardy has adapted the modes of melodrama and sensation fiction for his own purposes, Nemesvari thus suggests that "evoking the melodramatic and the sensational becomes a way for Hardy to engage with the late Victorian cultural, economic, and sexual anxieties that are central elements to his plots" (1). Or, above all, perhaps, as Suzanne Keen remarks in her study of various responses to Hardy's fiction in his day, he departed from the model of the conventional *Bildungsroman* narrative of development (Keen *Hardy's Brains* 2014, 83). While *Desperate Remedies* (1871) was Hardy's first novel to be published, it was certainly not his first attempt at writing one. His first attempt, entitled *The Poor Man and the Lady*[20], was rejected by the censors on account of its radicalism. Hardy had begun writing it back home in Bockhampton, in the late summer of 1867, after an extremely negative experience of a five-year sojourn in London. Finished in mid-1868, the manuscript was a violent attack on London society, so much so that, according to Richard Taylor, it was evidently written in a "mood of discontent and urban 'ennui'" (*The Neglected Hardy* 1982, 7), and, as he further observes, the manuscript was rejected by the publishers due to its satiric realism which, viewed as "unacceptable caricature" (8), was considered too vicious a misrepresentation of the upper classes.

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[19] See Hardy's view on this in his essay,"*The science of fiction,"* (1891), in *The Nineteenth Century Novel. A Critical Reader.* Ed. Stephen Regan (New York: Routledge and The Open University, 2001) 100-104.

[20] Jane Mattisson, *Knowledge and Survival in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (Lund: University of Lund, 2000) 23.
A revised version of the novel was published much later in the form of a novella appearing in the *New Quarterly* and *Harper's Weekly* in 1878 with the title *An Indiscretion in the Life of an Heiress*.

Desperate Remedies (1871) is thus generally regarded as Hardy's second attempt at novel writing[21], and involved adapting to the requirements of the publishing houses. With getting published in mind, Hardy largely followed George Meredith's advice to give his novel more plot than his previous endeavor, and, as expressed by Marlene Springer, "attempt a novel with a purely artistic purpose" (Springer *Hardy's Use of Allusion,* 1983, 18). As stated by Richard Taylor, Hardy thus departed from the more Thackeray and Trollope inspired style of his first manuscript. Moreover, to get published, Hardy had to contribute £75 to the less reputable house of William Tinsley. Thus, *Desperate Remedies,* Hardy's first novel to be published, was anonymously issued in 1871 (Taylor 1982, 9; Springer 1983, 18). Although, as Penelope Vigar observes, many critics maintain that the novel suffers greatly from the influence on Hardy of the thriller and sensational novels of Wilkie Collins (Vigar 1974, 62), this apparently did not prevent critics from viewing it favorably, noticing in the novel a hint of the ideas and impressions characteristic of Hardy's later novels (Pinion 1978, 18; Nemesvari 2011, 25-47). As Hillis Miller asserts, "the deeper configurations of Hardy's work remain the same from the beginning to the end. The evolution of his work is a gradual clarification or bringing to the surface of these structures and their meanings rather than a change in the structures themselves" (*Distance* 1970, ix). Or, as Richard Taylor remarks in *The Neglected Hardy: Thomas Hardy's Lesser Novels* (1982), it is "the individual impress of Hardy's mind which gives rise to the inescapable unity" of his work (2). Given this acknowledgement by critics of *Desperate Remedies* as a typical Hardy novel, well worth considering, I will study this "impress of Hardy's mind", soul and heart, with a focus on the manner in which his ideas on art and artistic experience appear within the narrative, mirroring not only the scope of Hardy's interests and reading, but, more importantly, his poetic imagination. Or, as Hardy himself maintained in his personal writings, "the characters, however they may differ, express mainly the author, his largeness of heart or otherwise, his culture, his insight, and very little of any other living person" (Orel 1966, 124).

With *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1870), Hardy tried to accommodate himself to the recommendations of the critics, who claimed that his form of talent was best used in writing a "light 'pastoral story'", for, according to them, he was at his best when describing rustic characters and scenery (Pinion 1978, 20). As Richard Taylor informs us, the novel was "defined by its limitations: modest in scope, careful in execution" (Taylor 1982, 32), and, though, as Pinion maintains in *A Hardy Companion: A Guide to the*

[21] As Mattisson observes (University of Lund, 2000, 23), it is really his first novel, based as it is on his first attempt, *The Poor Man and the Lady*.

Works of Thomas Hardy and their Background (1978), more recent critics have discovered in it "the foreshadowing of tragic overtones" (21), it is usually defined as a "comic romance". Nevertheless, Hardy had a difficult time even with this novel. In fact, it was rejected by Macmillan himself in 1871, which almost discouraged Hardy from novel writing for life. Contacting Tinsley soon after, however, with more luck, the novel was published in serial form in *Tinsley Magazine* in 1872, and in 1873, it was published as a novel, in the same volume as his first novel to be published with his name on the title page, *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (Taylor 1982, 32). As with most of Hardy's novels, the autobiographical elements have also been pointed out by critics. Hardy himself claimed that the plot of *Under the Greenwood Tree* was largely derived from stories he had heard from his family (Pinion 1978, 20). In Hardy's treatment of the rustics, however, critics maintain that the literary influence of Shakespeare and Dickens is more perceptible in this early novel than in his later ones (22). As I will illustrate in my analysis, notions of creativity appear in this novel, exhibiting within the interstices of its narrative what can be understood of this as a covert theme. As we shall see, the influence of Plato and Aristotle is also more obvious in this early novel.

A Pair of Blue Eyes was finished in 1873 and, as mentioned above, it was the first of Thomas Hardy's novels to bear his name on the title page (26). The novel was considered a success and was praised for its structure by many great writers. In its Preface, Hardy refers to it as a story of a "region of dream and mystery" permeated by an "atmosphere like the twilight of a night vision" (Orel 1966, 7). However, Hardy was later to excuse himself for the "immaturity in its views of life and in its workmanship" (8). Comparable to *Desperate Remedies* (1871) rather than *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), the novel contains passages where the subject of art, and more specifically novel writing, is explicitly dealt with. In a sense the subject of novel writing can be conceived as one of its sub-plots, for as Richard Taylor observes, with Elfride's response to the harsh criticism of her romance being suggestive of Hardy's own early experiences of the literary scene, it appears an implicit critique of the restrictive criteria for decorum and smoothness of style in publications (1982, 45). Noting that the novel was written with the assistance of Emma Gifford during the time of their engagement, however, Michael Millgate, in his essay "Thomas Hardy: The biographical sources", perceives the story to hint at the Giffords' sense of "class superiority". Suggesting that Hardy's portrayal of Elfride was evidently modeled on his fiancée, therefore, Michael Millgate also sees the novel as hinting at Hardy's "responsive resentment" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 7-8). Nevertheless, interpreting the portrayal of the literary critic, Knight, as essentially derogatory, as is here argued, it can more generally be understood as an implied

critique of his literary stand. Clearly, in this regard, whether consciously or unconsciously transposed into his writing, the trauma of Hardy's negative experiences with publishers and reviewers affected his writing in one way or another. Considering that he only gave up novel writing after the publication of fourteen novels, with a steady rise of popularity among readers, the difficulties encountered with censorship and the vitriolic attacks of reviewers appear to have strengthened him to persevere in his convictions as he learned to eschew the restrictions imposed in favor of his personal, anti-representational style of artistic sublimation.

With regard to the three later novels selected, their scandalous notoriety would make a discussion of the issue of censorship seem redundant. Yet, in the context of this project, it is interesting to recall the challenges involved in getting *The Return of the Native* (1878) published. According to John Paterson, in his study, *The Making of 'The Return of the Native'* (1960), evidence in the manuscript betrays the existence of an earlier yet now lost so-called *Ur*-version of the novel (8-9). As can be judged from the condition of the manuscript, Paterson notes, the novel had "a long and complicated history" (6). Apparently, when Hardy submitted the novel in a germinal form as a work in progress to Leslie Stephen for his preliminary assessment, he considered the relationships between Eustacia, Wildeve and Thomasin as potentially 'dangerous' for a family magazine (4). In view of this, Paterson suggests that Hardy may well have envisaged the story of Thomasin, in the *Ur*-version, comparable to that of Tess, as an attack upon the institution of marriage (16). It appears, therefore, that Thomasin was more prominent as a character in Hardy's original conception of her. Further commenting on the effect Leslie Stephen's disapproval of Hardy's work in progress had on him, Paterson concludes "that the provisional novel first seen and rejected by him was the *Ur*-novel itself; and that his serious misgivings prompted Hardy to bowdlerize it before sending it elsewhere" (17). However, Paterson maintains that Hardy was also eventually to make changes for more artistic than editorial purposes (17). Thus, Eustacia Vye was almost totally transfigured from literally being a wicked witch to becoming the more ambiguously sinister figure in the novel as we know it (17). Interestingly, however, as Paterson points out: "The diabolism basic to Eustacia's original conception discloses itself [in the bowdlerized novel, so that] she is pictured as formidable as well as grand" (19-20). Furthermore, Paterson specifies that though Eustacia's satanism is certainly consistent with the romantic Byronism she is specifically associated with in the manuscript version, it can be traced to an older source: "It derives from the unsophisticated folk imagination with its genius for the occult and the marvelous, for the imagery of ghosts and ogres and demons" (21-22). In this context, however, the issue of the bowd-

lerization of Hardy's original conception of the *Return of the Native* (1878) in its assumed *Ur*-version is only of relevance when considered in the more general sense of studying the various effects of artistic repression on Hardy's writing. As here argued, the necessity for Hardy to restrain his artistic impulses to ensure that his manuscripts would be accepted for publication is detectable in his novels in the form of a trace that permeates their narrative with implicitly conveyed ideas on art, creativity and artistic yearning.

Undoubtedly, however, Hardy's negative experiences with publishers and reviewers reached their culmination with his two last novels prior to his resumption of poetry writing, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1896). As we shall see, as Dale Kramer points out in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy* (1999), of the two novels, the latter "presents more complexities as a cultural marker" in that it happened to appear at a time when the traditional Victorian form was being revised from a three- to a one-volume format. In other words, being the only one of Hardy's novels initially published in one volume in Britain, it escaped the moralistic control formerly given to the lending libraries to authorize publications in the three-volume format system (168). Written and published during a transitional period of social turmoil when, as Kramer writes, "[traditional] Victorian values were being questioned on many fronts" (168), *Jude the Obscure* (1896) created as much of a public furor as it gained popular success. (168). While characteristic of Hardy's fiction, its subtext is permeated with class and gender issues, and, as Kramer notes, it contains an exceptionally restrained "raw rage" against the rigidity of British social conventionality, which could account for the intensity of the anger it provoked among its critics. Yet, even in our day, both *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1896) still retain their power to agitate their readers as novels associated with questions of class, gender, and feminist issues of relevance. In view of the more restrictive demands of censorship for the publication of the former, its much-criticized fragmented narrative, inconsistencies and irregularity of style can at best be understood as the traces of a silencing, inevitably disrupting the repressive force of imposed censorship. Commenting on the harsh conditions of censorship Hardy faced, Margaret Higonnet, in her 'Introduction' (1998) to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), thus writes: "Even before the novel was printed, the rejection of the manuscript on moral grounds by three publishers in a row guaranteed that it would be born into controversy" (xix). As Linda Shires argues in her previously mentioned essay, however, Hardy's strategy of working against the grain of conventional narrative enabled him to produce a sense of the flux of life and to implicitly convey a social critique (Kramer 1999, 145-163). Likewise, receptive to Hardy's artistry, in her 'Introduction', Higonnet observes that he used nar-

rative structure as a critical tool for effecting a sense of "the real" (xxix), or, as she mentions Hardy to have explained when responding to criticism: "The truth is that in artistic matters, literary & other, you often best keep the rules by occasionally breaking them" (xxix). The issues of censorship in relation to these notoriously controversial novels are well known, as they have consistently been taken up by literary reviewers in presentations of Thomas Hardy and his works. As stated in the above, however, the conditions of censorship Hardy was forced to cope with have been taken up insofar as they are interesting for the claims of this project. In other words, at this stage there is no need to go into the details of Hardy's many difficulties with publishers or to discuss the various effects these might have had on his writing, detrimental or otherwise. Of interest in the context of this project, therefore, is how the repressive control of censorship, with its demands of decorum, teleological narrative, a smoothness and unity of style, to cite but a few, gave rise to narrative disruption in Hardy's writing, effecting a subtext conveying ideas on art, artistic production and artistic potential.

A comparative analysis of the discourses

As presented in the introductory section above, Kristeva's psychoanalytic understanding of intertextuality as one of the primary psychic processes determined by Freud, a dynamic transposition of sign systems, forms the basis for this study of Hardy's fiction. In order to clarify how Kristeva's theory is utilized, its relevance for studying Hardy's writing is now explicated in this presentation of the theoretical framework of this project. Similarly, the relevance of some aspects of Lacan's theory are elucidated in this section to shed further light on the methodology on which this research rests. In addition to this clarification of how Kristeva and Lacan's theories are used to explicate the strong narrative effect of Hardy's novels, this explanatory section presents a comparative analysis of the basic tenets of Hardy's views and interests, inferred from the evidence of his annotations and notes on his reading, and those of Kristeva and Lacan's theories. This section therefore also contains a short subsection clarifying the fundamental psychoanalytical terms of Kristeva and Lacan to contribute to a better understanding of the methodology used.

As previously mentioned, Kristeva explains intertextuality as resulting from a transposition of signifying systems: "every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an intertextuality)

(*Revolution* 1984, 60)[22]. Kristeva therefore coined the more appropriate term 'transposition' for her theory of intertextuality, which, as Michael Worton observes in his essay "Intertextuality: to inter textuality or to resurrect it?" (*Cross-References* 1986), dismisses the very notion of origin, and which extends to all forms of texts, not only poetry (Worton 1986, 14; Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 60). Hence, according to Kristeva, our discourses change while remaining essentially the same. In this sense, as we shall see, Jacques Lacan's theory of alienation and subjectification in language proves as pertinent for an intertextual reading of Thomas Hardy's fiction as Kristeva's. Although the basis of my analysis is to study the appearance of an inter-text in Thomas Hardy's novels which reflects his reading, it does not attempt to give a detailed survey of its possible sources. My aim is rather to illustrate how this inter-text can be read as a transposition of texts, whose ideas are analogous with those contained within the tenets of present-day theorists like Kristeva and Lacan. This agrees well with Hardy's conviction that "there can be more in a book than the author consciously puts there" (Orel Personal Writings 1966, 36), and that "What has been written cannot be blotted. Each new style of novel must be the old with added ideas, not an ignoring and avoidance of the old. And so of religion and a good many other things" (Millgate Life 1984, 227). As Linda Shires argues in her essay "The radical aesthetics of Tess" (1999), Hardy evidently drew on the views and techniques of a radical strain of the Victorian aesthetics which formed his social and intellectual context, revealed by his reading of the theories of poetic practice and the philosophy of art by Robert Browning, John Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle, William Johnson Fox and Richard Henry Horne, to name but a few (Kramer Cambridge 1999, 159-161).

Moreover, as the literary studies of Catherine Maxwell (2008) and Bernard Richards (1988) draw attention to, there are detectable parallels between the Victorian literary scene and that of the twentieth century. Thus, they argue for the view that Victorian poetry and poetic theory are important sources of influence on current literary theory (Maxwell 2008, 314-19; Richards 1988, 250). Walter Pater's analysis of Platonism in his work *Plato and Platonism* (1910), however, reveals an early manifestation of intertextuality awareness dating back to the ancients. Thus, in Walter Pater's diachronic perspective, "as in many other very original products of human

[22] Michael Worton, "Intertextuality to inter textuality or to resurrect it?," *Cross-References Modern French Theory and the Practice of Criticism*. Ed. David Kelley and Isabelle Llasera (Society for French Studies, 1986) 14. Worton opposes Kristeva's wider definition of intertextuality, which rejects the very notion of origin in the definitions of Bloom, Riffaterre and Tournier. The definitions of the latter three all involve describing an act of origination. Moreover, Bloom and Riffaterre concentrate on poetry, while Kristeva extends her definition to all forms of texts.

genius, the seemingly new is old also, a palimpsest, a tapestry of which the actual threads have served before, or like the animal frame itself every particle of which has already lived and died many times over. Nothing but the lifegiving principle of cohesion is new, the expressiveness which familiar thoughts attain by novel juxtaposition. In other words, the form is new" (6, Maxwell 2008, 222). As Pater goes on to argue, what is Plato's theory "but an effort to enforce the Pythagorean […] eternal definition of the finite upon […] the infinite, the indefinite, formless brute matter, of our experience of the world?" (60). Our present-day understanding of the phenomenon of intertextuality, therefore, is itself but a recovery of an insight of ancient Greece, with Plato's reminiscence theory and the idea of the mind working like a wax tablet (Pater 1910, 62-9).[23] Elaborating on such thoughts, Walter Pater thus writes, "in the history of philosophy there are no absolute beginnings. Fix where we may the origin of this or that doctrine or idea, […] the specialist will still be able to find us some earlier anticipation of the doctrine, that mental tendency" (5). According to Hillis Miller in *Distance and Desire* (1970), this idea of the brain as a palimpsest of memory set forth by Pater was also appealing to Thomas Hardy, as it characterized the radical aesthetic of Victorian literary and intellectual circles.[24]

From an intertextual perspective, Hardy's novels can thus be appreciated as an intertextual network of the Classical, Romantic and Victorian literary

[23] See also Plato, *Phaedrus and Letters VII and VIII.* Trans. Walter Hamilton. (London: Penguin, 1973) 49-57, 98-101.
The Republic. Ed. Trans. Francis MacDonald. (Cornford London: Oxford UP, 1941) 69-70, 179-89, 211-20,256-63, 348-59, *Timaeus and Critias.* Trans. Desmond Lee. (London: Penguin, 1977) 8-10, 40, 121-2.

[24] Catherine Maxwell, *Second Sight: The Visionary Imagination in Late Victorian Literature* (Manchester and NY: Manchester UP, 2008) 351-65. Maxwell notes Walter Pater's view on the artistic process as "a coming together of energies which are capable of disseverance and fission" (360). See also Walter Pater, "An Essay on Style," *Appreciations with an Essay on Style* (London: Macmillan, 1915) 27. Pater's conception of the mind/soul dichotomy in a work of art/literature can be set against the dichotomies of the theories of Kristeva and Lacan. Walter Pater, *Plato and Platonism. A Series of Lectures by Walter Pater.* (Oxford and NY: Macmillan, 1910. Ed. London, 1967) 6-8, 14, 18, 24, 60, 167. Walter Pater further opines that "The One", "The Absolute", being the "principle of reasonable unity", is equivalent to "Pure Nothing", to a void 32-5, 37, 39. This compares well with the view of Kristeva and Lacan of the "subject of logic as death", even referred to by Lacan as a 'void'. Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language* Trans. Margaret Waller. Ed. S Roudiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1984) 22. Other references to the view of intertextuality in the nineteenth century are found in, Thomas Hardy, *The Literary Notebooks of Thomas Hardy.* Ed. Lennart Björk (London Basingstoke: Maxmillan 1985) 2 vols. "The contemporary disciples of Descartes, or of Leibnitz, & those even of Kant, are all at bottom Platonists, for they agree with Plato in opposing absolutely the world of sensation to that of thought" (vol. 1, 223). Other quotes on this issue are found in *Notebooks* vol. 2, 96, 106, 185 and 201 to refer to just a few. For the characteristic Victorian notion of 'eternal recurrence' see Hillis Miller, *Thomas Hardy, Distance and Desire* (Cambridge: Massinger, 1970) 231, 264-5.

and philosophical texts of his reading[25]. They can be read, that is, as bearing the traces or marks of Hardy's eclectic self-education as it is manifested in his *Notebooks*, for, as Hardy himself expressed it, and as mentioned above, "no doubt there can be more to a book than the author consciously puts there" (Orel *Personal Writings* 1966, 36). Once again, to quote Hillis Miller on the subject: "The relation of a novel to its sources is not that of a sign to its referent […] but that of a sign to another sign […] so that a true beginning or a source can never be reached" (*Distance* 1970, 36). In other words, Hardy's fiction apparently prefigures the theories of Kristeva and Lacan as evidenced through a correspondence of ideas in their intertextuality. Such a reading is all-the-more relevant by reason of the fact that Freud based himself largely on literature when elaborating his theory. As expressed by Hillis Miller, "Freud himself considered writers as his predecessors" (*Desire* 1970, 26). Making a similar observation, Walter Pater writes: "Philosophy itself, mental and moral, has its predecessors, its forethoughts, in the poetry that preceded it" (*Plato* 1910, 5). Accordingly, sophisticated views of the strange workings of language come across in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) when Angel, having asked Tess to further explain her pessimistic attitude toward life, is impressed by the sophistication of thought in her answer, uttered in a curious mix of simple Standard English and dialect. As specified by the narrative voice, "[it was] expressed in her own native phrases – assisted a little by her Sixth Standard training" (180). As a result, when musing on this, Angel is given an insight of the present-day view of a transposition of signifying systems. Thus, he reflects that "what are called advanced thoughts are really in great part but the latest fashion in definition – a more accurate expression, by words in *logy* and *ism*, of sensations which men and women have vaguely grasped for centuries" (180). Or, as philosopher Tilottama Rajan reflects in Intersections: Nineteenth Century Philosophy and *Contemporary Theory* (1995) on the relationship between language and reality, "human beings are ineluctably promised to and derivative of something Other than themselves, whether we call that Other 'materiality', 'the trace', 'Being', 'the unconscious' or 'the will to power'" (20).

As Lennart Björk observes in his essay "Hardy's reading" in *Thomas Hardy: The Writer and his Background* (1980), however, when delving into Hardy's *Notebooks* critics tend to prefer to seek proof of Hardy's being well-read in the Classics, the Romantics and Darwin, while overlooking the large number of quotes revelatory of his manifest interest in texts on human

[25] Hillis Miller, *Distance and Desire* (1970) 174-5. Catherine Maxwell, *Second Sight: The Visionary Imagination in Late Victorian Literature.* (2008) 196. J.B. Bullen, *The Expressive Eye and Perception in the Work of Thomas Hardy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 11. Lennart Björk, *Psychological Vision and Social Criticism in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1986) 69-75, 130.

nature and social science (103).[26] Judging from Thomas Hardy's literary notes (Björk *Literary Notes* 1974), he was especially well-informed on the socio-psychological theories of Charles Fourier and Auguste Comte, both of whom emphasize the role of the emotions in human life (108). Of central interest in this context, however, is the opinion these writers both upheld of the human being as subject to conflicting inner forces. Thus, quotations from Charles Fourier's doctrine of the dichotomy of the passions versus the social order, and from Auguste Comte's view of revolution as stemming from the struggle between the Intellect and the Heart (107-8) figure in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), indicating a scope of theories which align well with those of Kristeva and Lacan. As Bruce Fink notes in his study of the theory of Lacan, *The Lacanian Subject. Between Language and Jouissance* (1997), "[It] may seem tantamount to a return to the old form and matter metaphor dating back to at least Plato; but in Lacan there is always a twist to the return; substance gets the better of form and teaches it a trick or two" (119). In her study *Thomas Hardy and Desire: Conceptions of the Self* (2013), Jane Thomas presents a Lacanian reading of Hardy's fiction, where she refers to Hardy's understanding of desire as having developed out of his reading of philosophers including Plato, Spinoza and Schopenhauer, to cite but a few (6). Judging from Hardy's expressed opinion on the subject, therefore, the theories which particularly appealed to him were essentially of an anti-rationalist kind: "Have been thinking over the dictum of Hegel – that the real is the rational and the rational the real […] that the idea is all. These venerable philosophers seem to start wrong" (Millgate *Life* 1984, 185). Further rejecting the absolutist stance of the rationalists, Hardy writes in a letter he never sent: "My own interest lies largely in non-rationalistic subjects […] By which I do not mean foolishness, but rather a principle for which there is no exact name, lying at the indifference-point between rationality and irrationality" (Florence Hardy *The Later Years of Thomas Hardy 1892-1928* 2011, 90). Indeed, Hardy's predilection for the "non-rationalistic" in life corresponds well with the theories of Kristeva and Lacan, of an unrepresentable disruptive force within us, perhaps what Hardy denominates "a vague thrusting or urging force" (360).

Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), however, also abound in quotations on the creative process, and the mysteries of the making of a great work of art, many of which express the Romantic ideas of imagination and the creative power. Here it is interesting to note the similarity between Kristeva's theory of the pre-symbolic Chora as an experience of being at one with the world, of the maternal pre-symbolic bliss that engenders the creative impulse of the artist, and Wordsworth's creed of the infant sensibility

[26] See also Lennart Björk *Psychological Vision* 1987, I-II.

(*Prelude* 1971, 82-8), his view of the poetic spirit as it is expressed in "The Prelude" [27]. As Norman Page observes in his essay, "Art and aesthetics" (1999), however, even if Hardy's relationship with the Romantics was ambiguous concerning such key elements as Wordsworth's near religious veneration of Nature and Keats' philosophy of art expressed in his *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, what Linda Shires names the 'radical aesthetics' of Hardy (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 145) certainly embraces the basic anti-rationalism and Gothic elements of the Romantic sublime (49-51). Moreover, Shelley remained Hardy's favorite poet throughout his life, so much so that, as observed by Norman Page, "Hardy remained committed to a Romantic view of art as expressing the uniqueness of its creator's mind and personality [though it] did not involve the abdication from responsibility […]. After all, in Shelley, his favorite poet, he had an outstanding example of an artist who reconciled individuality and responsibility" (51). Nevertheless, in conclusion Page perceives Hardy's *Notebooks* as containing no claim of adherence to any aesthetic school or movement, no conscious, dispassionate aesthetic program of his own apart from a recurrent rejection of 'representation' or 'realism' in art in favor of a "highly, even eccentrically, personal vision" and an aesthetic judgement based on subjective criteria (38). In fact, even at the age of eighty Hardy claimed he had "no philosophy […] merely a confused heap of impressions [of] private associations" (39). In other words, as argued in this project, what Norman Page qualifies as Hardy's "dogged or defiant anti-aestheticism" (38), and which Page determines as "an impulse to express a highly personal vision", has left a mark in Hardy's writing, "from novels to poems and scattered observations in notebooks and letters" (40).

Though the views of Hardy and of both Kristeva and Lacan on art and the dynamics of artistic production undoubtedly differ in many aspects, they share the opinion of the artist as someone extraordinary, aware of living in a realm of mere appearances, and of the essential truth as being other than it seems. In other words, their notion of an artist has the attribute of the greater insight of Plato's philosopher king in *The Republic* (1972, 88-92, 183-93). The many quotes in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) on the distorting, restricting and even repressive effect of language on the real of Rationalism, seems to indicate what the 'realm of appearances' alludes to. Tellingly, a quote by Mathew Arnold thus reads: "More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us. Without poetry, our science will appear incomplete; and most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry" (Björk 1985, Vol. 2, 182). It is due to this greater insight

[27] William Wordsworth, "Blest: The Infant Babe […] Pre-eminent till death," *The Prelude. A Parallel Text.* Ed. J C Maxwell (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1971) 85-86.

into the experience of life that "nothing is as it appears" (Vigar 1974, 213), and thus there is a resulting need to break through the inhibiting boundary of 'mere appearances' and share this sense with others, that an artist represents a potential social benefactor, for Hardy and Kristeva and Lacan alike. As a quotation expresses it in the *Literary Notebooks* (1985): "In art my illusion is THE truth" (Björk 1985, Vol. 2, 215). For, as further exemplified in another quotation from the same source:

> The range of human thoughts & emotions greatly transcends the range of such symbols as man has invented to express & it becomes therefore the business of Art to use these symbols in a double way. They must be used for the direct repres.n/ (sic) of thoughts & feeling but they must also be combined by so subtle an imagination as to suggest much which there is no means of directly expressing […] In poetry the first order, almost every word […] is raised to a higher power. It continues to be an articulate sound & a logical step in the argument; but it becomes also a musical sound & centre of emotional force. (43)

Indeed, in Hardy's view, the greater insight held by the artist must surely have been the view of language and rationality as restriction, for many of his quotations deal with Art as a form of mysticism, communicating a sense of what cannot be expressed with words:

> Our real life is not the life we live, & we feel that our deepest, nay, our most intimate thoughts are quite apart from ourselves, for we are other than our thoughts & dreams. And it is only at special moments – it may be by merest accident – that we live our own life […]. Facts are nothing but the laggards – the spies & camp-followers – of the great forces we cannot see. (78)

In this quotation, Hardy's stance, when viewed in the light of his reading and his expressed views, agrees well with Kristeva's, as phrased by her: "The subject of logic is merely death, the arrested process" (*Revolution* 1984, 229). It also agrees well with the dynamic view of the subject held by Lacan, according to whom "the letter kills the body" (Fink 1997, 12), but our inarticulate sense of self lives on inside us. In other words, for Lacan, with 'the subject of logic' as a 'pure' signifier within the symbolic, deriving from an idealized fantasy memory, at the heart of it there is pure emptiness, a void[28]. Studying Hardy's verse in her work, *Thomas Hardy's Brain: Psychology, Neurology and Hardy's Narratives* (2014), Suzanne Keen observes

[28] Archive for the "Lacan Category" https://avoidingthevoid.wordpress.com/category/lacan/ (retrieved August 2, 2019)).

his predilection for non-closure, for "a suspension of resolution […] upon which the contraries of Hardy's poems teeter" (109), or, in other words, for what in this context is referred to as a 'threshold state'. Noting this as the mark of influence on Hardy of his favorite poet Shelley (108), Keen lays the focus on Hardy's use of the nonce word 'unbloom' in his poem 'Hap', to argue for an idea of its significance reminiscent of the Lacanian view of 'the subject of logic'; as understood by Keen, the word 'unbloom', that is, translates a state of desire with "vacancy at its core" (109), in that it "takes away [*un*] as it gives [*blooms*], leaving the ghost image of its positive fulfilment behind" (109). In a clinical context, Lacan's theory of the subject, however, stresses a self-estrangement which may result in a pathological state where the individual is so cut off from his/her subjectivity, "that [s/he] would choose to take his or her life in order to be rid of such a foreign presence" (11). In extreme cases, that is, the subject may die during the process of coming to be in language.

Further, referring to the matter of Hardy's reading above, there is significant evidence for his interest in the workings of language, with its full implications for the individual. As many Hardy researchers have noticed, being well-read in the academic works and political issues of his time, Hardy was especially drawn to the ideas of J. S. Mill (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 66; Keen 2014, 26-27; Richardson *New Woman* 2001, 4-5) on the position of women in a social system under patriarchal law. As revealed by quotations in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), therefore, Hardy was informed as to the view of 'femininity' defined within patriarchy as culturally constructed for the benefit of men. As expressed by Mill in his essay "The subjection of women" (1869): "What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing – the result of forced repression […] for the benefit of their masters" (Richardson *New Woman* 2001, 5).[29] Even so, Hardy research reveals him to have sympathized with some of the so-called New Woman writers opposed to the social norms imposed on women of their epoch (11-12), while quotations in his *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) further evince an insight into the plight of women of his time: "The untrue feminine is of man's making, whilst the strong, the natural, the true womanly is of God's making" (Vol. 2, 60). So does the quotation, "the woman who tells the truth & is not a liar about her sexuality is untrue to her sex & abhorrent to man, for he fashioned a model on imaginary lines & he

[29] Margaret Higonnet, "Introduction," *Sense of Sex. Feminist Perspectives on Hardy.* Ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993) 4. Hardy was very much aware "of the way constructions of gender difference must be read as effects of social power". The reference is found in John Kucich, *The Power of Lies: Transgression in Victorian Fiction* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1994) 204.

said, 'so I would have you', and every woman is an unconscious liar, for so man loves her" (Vol. 2, 69). In her study of Bathsheba in *The Return of the Repressed* (1972), Perry Miesel accordingly notes: "But the underlying nature of her character remains inscrutable, a characteristic, it seems, of Hardy's women in general" (47)[30]. Nevertheless, the above-presented evidence of Hardy's awareness of the line of reasoning of the more progressive intellectuals of his epoch, on the truly 'feminine' as indefinable in a patriarchal system, is worthy of notice in this project, in that a similar idea is formulated by Kristeva and Lacan. According to Kristeva, as Toril Moi observes in *The Kristeva Reader* (1989), the impulse of the artist derives from the feminine, in that it is an effect of the semiotic Chora[31]; it is "a nonverbal substance (defined as the body, the drives, jouissance" [32] (10), in subversion of the Law of the Father, on which it nevertheless depends as a supportive structure; "without some kind of subject structure […] creative action is impossible" (14). Likewise, according to Lacan, with feminine subjectivity being in excess of the so-called phallic function of the Symbolic order, "there is no signifier for, or essence of Woman as such" (Fink 1997, 115; Lacan *Encore* 1999, 32, 35, 57-58). In this regard, Lacan argues for a specifically feminine jouissance since, being radically Other within the phallic, [s/he] embodies the 'Other jouissance'. As explained by Lacan, this is "a form of sublimation through love that provides full satisfaction of the drives" (Fink 1997, 120). Thus, "outside all systems" of the post-Oedipal phallic sexuality, like the semiotic Chora of Kristeva's theory, the Lacanian Other feminine jouissance is asexual (120) in that its desire pushes for fulfillment beyond the

[30] Jacques Derrida, *Glas I* (Paris: Denoel/Gonthier,1981) 2 Vols. 176-84. Derrida notes that Immanuel Kant in *Anthropologie* argues for the idea of 'femininity' as inscrutable, a view Kant most probably derived from the Ancient Greeks. As Derrida observes, however, Kant uses the idea of the inscrutable feminine to formulate a theory of feminine psychology/sexuality which perpetuates the misogynous tradition of philosophy. According to Derrida, Kant secures woman's inferior position in society by maintaining that it is for her own good. Barbara Hardy, "Introduction," Thomas Hardy, *A Laodicean* (London: Macmillan, 1975) 15. Barbara Hardy observes that Thomas Hardy associated the creative force with the 'feminine' in that he likened women to artists.

[31] *Chora* is a term borrowed from Plato. In his creation myth it designates the mysterious mother and receptacle from which all things originate (*Timaeus* 1977, 63-73). It is the site of original "primitive chaos" (72). Kristeva uses "Chora" to refer to what is "anterior to any space, an economy of primary processes articulated by Freud's instinctual drives (Triebe)" (*Desire* 1982, 6). Kristeva defines "the Semiotic" as the "disposition, within the body, of instinctual drives […] as they affect language and its practice in dialectical conflict with […] the Symbolic" (18). The "Symbolic", according to Kristeva, is equivalent to Plato's Forms in that it is the "Paternal function". Thus, it represents the "grammatical and social constraints, symbolic law" (7). As Kristeva argues; "The speaking subject is engendered as belonging to both the semiotic Chora and the symbolic device, and that accounts for its eventual split nature" (7).

[32] "*Jouissance* is total joy or ecstasy (without any mystical connotations) through the workings of the signifier; this also implies the presence of meaning (j'ouïs sens *transl.* I hear meaning) "requiring it by going beyond it" (Kristeva *Desire* 1982, 16).

phallic Symbolic; in other words, in desire for the impossible within the phallic Symbolic, the desire of Other jouissance effects its sublimation in creative activity. With Lacan, there is accordingly an explicit link between the feminine and the artistic impulse in his conception of creative sublimation. As both Lacan and Kristeva consider it, however, their definition of 'woman' does not necessarily refer to a biological/genetic female makeup; that is, they define the sexes in relation to the way they are split by language. In other words: "With respect to the Symbolic order [the feminine subject] is not whole, bounded, or limited" (Fink 1997, 107; Lacan *Encore* 1999, 7, 9, 22, 57-59, 62-63).

With regard to the above, therefore, Hardy's anti-rationalist life stance, in addition to his adherence to a vaguely defined and rather mystical aesthetics, due to his understanding of the workings of language as serving the interests of the social power structure, by way of an implicit association of ideas, aligns well with the psychoanalytic view of the creative force as derivative of the truly feminine. While, assuredly, Hardy did not fully adhere to the tenets of Romanticism, he was well versed in Romantic poetry, which, as we are aware, certainly affected his writing. Accordingly, in Tennyson's[33] two poems problematizing the role of the artist in society, "The Lady of Shalott" (1833) and "The Palace of Art" (1832), 'woman' is used as a metaphor for the creative force of an artist. With both poems dealing with the conflict between the interiority of artistic expression and the exteriority of its social expression,[34] the metaphoric portrayal of an artist as a woman conveys the idea of their shared experience of living in two seemingly irreconcilable worlds. In view of this, as considered here, Tennyson's poetry appears to have left its imprint in Hardy's fiction, as revealed through its metaphoric portrayals of the creatively inclined characters' sense of living a 'threshold existence', half trapped in the realm of social expression. As we know, Hardy's novels are notorious for their portrayal of the rebellious victims of society and, more often than not, the victims are women. Some of these characters, however, come through as more sensitive to the contrast between an inner and outer sense of 'self' than others; they are shown to intuit some other realm beyond ordinary experience. The characters with this insight are described as feminine, though they are not necessarily women; in some way or other, they appear to have an essentially creative inclination. Often appearing in the intensely poetic passages of Hardy's novels, these characters become

[33] *The Romantic Poetry Handbook.* Eds.Michael O'Neill, Madeleine Callaghan (Oxford: John Wiley Blackwell & Sons Ltd. 2018) 16. Tennyson is generally classified with the Romantic poets.

[34] Talor, Maja, "Woman as a metaphor for the artistic spirit," *The Victorian Web Literature, History and Culture in the Age of Victoria 2003*. http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/tennyson/taylor.html (retrieved August 2, 2019)

interpretable as iconic projections implicitly conveying the idea of the link between the creative force and the feminine. As previously observed, the many quotations on matters of psychology in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) reveal his interest in such theories, yet with a predilection for conceptions of the duality of human nature, as can be noted through the following entry: "This complexity of origin is, I believe, to a great extent the cause of my seeming inconsistency. I am double, as it were, & one half of me laughs while the other weeps" (Vol. 1, 176).

In contrast, bearing in mind Hardy's disinclination to blindly accept the contentions of any rigid school of thought, Suzanne Keen reminds us of his anti-rationalism, observing that "he would discard psychological ideas […] that did not jibe with his experience of people" (*Hardy's Brains* 2014, 30). Accordingly, she quotes Hardy's expressed view in *Life and Works* (1876), that "there is more to read outside books than in them." (30). Nevertheless, more generally, Norman Page, in his essay "Art and Aesthetics" (1999), supposes Hardy's characteristic defiance of dominant belief systems to have developed out of his position as an almost entirely self-educated intellectual (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 40-1). Moreover, Page argues, thus allowed to give free rein to his inquisitiveness in his scholarship, the intellectual freedom Hardy enjoyed of not having to adapt to the syllabus of a university department had in all likelihood made him a "lifelong reader", an intellectual "in a real sense" of "remarkable intellectual openness" (42). Hardy's aesthetics, in other words, would have been inhibited by the so-called "imperatives of specialization" of a "traditional map of learning", as Page expresses it (44). According to Page, therefore, Hardy's "assorted and highly personal culture finds direct and sometimes startling expression [in] especially his fiction." (42). Again, Hardy's eccentricity comprises his thinking about art in general, which embodied both the literary and non-literary arts, including architecture, dance, music, painting, and sculpture. Therefore, as Page notes Hardy remarks in his *Notebook* and autobiography, "I and my sisters are one" – [we are all] aspects of a single entity – Art" (44); in addition to this he writes: "few literary critics discern the solidarity of all the arts" (44). True to his anti-rationalist convictions, however, Hardy never formulated a conscious, coherent program of an aesthetics of his own, apparently preferring to express a diffuse, vague advocacy of "a highly personalized vision", an "individual mode of regard" or a "calculated carelessness" in his prose, and "cunning irregularities" in his verse (41-45);[35] skeptical about representational art styles he endorsed the view of inspired Art, of the "transformative"

[35] Robert Schweik, "The influence of religion, science, and philosophy on Hardy's writing," *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999) 54. "[Hardy was] usually skeptical and hesitant to embrace wholeheartedly any of the various systems of ideas current in his day."

artist. (48). Though Hardy's *Notebooks* show evidence of Hardy's reading and the lines of thought which caught his interest, as Robert Schweik contends in his study of Hardy's influences, there can be no certainty as to what his influences actually were, nor to the degree of their impact; in other words, Schweik writes, "the views he did incorporate in his texts were unsystematic and inconsistent 'impressions'" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 54). According to Schweik, therefore, intellectually, Hardy was "very much his own man" (54). Nevertheless, in support of the view argued for in this project, Norman Page highlights Hardy's firmly held opinion of the supremacy of verse, a view which, as Page further observes in his essay on Hardy's aesthetics, impacted his fiction in the sense that it is "very often poetic […] in broader conception" (49). Regarding this, therefore, Hardy's vaguely formulated aesthetic, which undeniably determined his writing of fiction and poetry, compares well with the ideas on creativity of Kristeva and Lacan. Following the claim here argued, in other words, the impression of Hardy's aesthetic perceptible in his fiction is not understood as consciously articulated; as previously advanced, it is rather comprehended as the trace of the unconscious signifying process exhibiting itself in the form of veritable intertextual nodes in the narrative text of Hardy's fiction, which can be interpreted in the present-day terms of Kristeva and Lacan.

Accordingly, we have noted above Kristeva's view that language with a high degree of poetic intensity is strongly connotative (*Révolution* 1974, 55-7). Still further, explicating such poetic intensity as effected by the disruptive force of the pre-Oedipal somatic maternal, Kristeva propounds that it is characteristic of transitional epochs or periods of social discord: as she expresses it, "this kind of language, through the particularity of its signifying operations, is an unsettling process […] of the identity of meaning and speaking subject […] it accompanies crises within social structures and institutions – the moments of their mutation, evolution, revolution, or disarray" (*Desire* 1982, 125).[36] According to both Kristeva and Lacan, however, texts of fiction and poetry also reflect the author or poet's capacity for jouissance. When viewed in this light, therefore, the pictorial scenes in Hardy's novels, interpretable, as we shall see, as iconic projections of an artistic frame of mind, also reflect the creative disposition of Hardy the author. Their poetic intensity, that is, attests to Hardy' sublimation of the abject maternal in his text; thus, revelatory of a discharge of the bodily drives which destabilize symbolic meaning by setting the signifying process in motion, the passages of poetic intensity in Hardy's fiction incite the reader to open out its multilayered text to decipher the various levels of its signifiance.

[36] See also Tina Chanter, "Introduction," *Revolt, affect, Collectivity. The Unstable Boundaries of Kristeva's Polis.* Eds.Tina Chanter, Ewa Plonowska Ziarek (New York: State University of New York, 2005) 1-8.

With the above I do not claim to have made an exhaustive analysis of the theories of Kristeva and Lacan, preferring to concentrate only on the aspects that are relevant in the context of their application to Hardy's fiction as explicated above. As Hillis Miller writes regarding critics and their reading of texts:

> A literary text is a texture of words, its threads and filaments reaching out into the pre-existing warp and woof of the language. The critic adds his weaving to the Penelope's web of the text, or unravels it so that its structuring threads may be laid bare, or reweaves it, traces out one thread in the text to reveal the design it inscribes, or cuts the whole cloth to one shape or another. In some way the critic necessarily does violence to the text in the act of understanding it or of interpreting it. There is no innocent reading which leaves the work exactly as it is. *(Distance*, 1970, viii)

Explication of the psychoanalytic basis

With this project involving an exposition of the workings of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality as a process of transposition of texts as revealed in the text of Hardy's fiction, an additional explication of some of Kristeva and Lacan's fundamental terms will help situate the reader in the basics of their psychoanalytical discourse. Since the aim of this project only necessitates an overall idea of the theories used to illustrate the argumentation, the terms are presented in their order of relevance to an understanding of the theoretical framework as it is used in this context. Readers unfamiliar with the use of these terms in practice, however, are encouraged to persevere in their reading, to allow the process of understanding to dissipate any opacity of meaning they may encounter on a first reading. In the following, you will thus find the terms of Kristeva's theory of the semiotic explicated to begin with, followed by those of Lacan's psychoanalytic theory.

Fundamental to Kristeva's theory of the semiotic is her concept of the Chora*,* the use of which she borrowed from Plato's creation myth, in which it designates the mysterious Great Mother, both phallic and maternal, which forms the receptacle and site of original "primitive chaos" from which all things originate (*Timaeus* 1977, 63-73). Kristeva accordingly uses the term to refer to the original economy of primary processes articulated by Freud as the instinctual drives (*Desire* 1982, 6). According to Kristeva, then, the Chora refers to a process of the body, "anterior to any space", consisting of the sheer pulsating energy discharges which form the pre-symbolic drives of rejection and stasis. The Chora thus designates the pre-symbolic relationship to the mother, which is pre-Oedipal; in other words, these drives obey

the maternal law of the body, which nevertheless prefigures the symbolic language of the Law of the Father of which, ultimately, the mother is an integral part. Hence the pre-symbolic Mother, in that she is biologically programmed to set up the phallic Law of the "not Mother" for the instinctual drives to enter the Law of the Father, which is of symbolic significance, is in fact a phallic Mother; nurturing and birth giving, the phallic Mother is endowed with power both to inseminate and to lactate.[37]

On the other hand, Kristeva's notion of the semiotic Chora refers to a discharge of the bodily drives within language; like an insurgent, this bodily discharge disrupts the signification of the Symbolic order as it gives rise to an ambiguity of meaning with its alternative bodily *sense* of non-signifying connotative modes communicated by means of the alternative effects of iconicity, rhythm and tone. As expressed by Kristeva: "Semiotic" refers to the "disposition, within the body, of instinctual drives […] as they affect language and its practice in dialectical conflict with […] the Symbolic" (*Desire* 1982, 18).

Of central importance in Kristeva's theory of the semiotic, therefore, are the concepts of the Symbolic order and the Law of the Father. Once again associated with concepts from Plato's philosophical reasoning, Kristeva's view of the Symbolic as the "Paternal function" is equivalent to Plato's idea of the realm of the Forms. Defined by Kristeva as the space of the "grammatical and social constraints, symbolic law" (*Desire* 1982, 7), the Symbolic thus refers to the structuring socio-symbolic phallic order, which is post-Oedipal. It is associated with paternal law as it is determined by the Law of the Father, whose prohibition of desire for the Mother is needed for the subject's entry into the social community. The subject's entry into the Symbolic order occurs through the identificatory process of primary narcissism whereby s/he takes on the identity of the symbolic self as defined by the social order in rejection of the pre-Oedipal Maternal sense of self; the latter is accordingly repulsed by the symbolic self as 'other'. The Symbolic order feeds on the discharge of the drives of the body which it rejects, however; as Kristeva expresses it, "the speaking subject is engendered as belonging to both the semiotic Chora and the symbolic device, and that accounts for its eventual split nature" (7). Hence, the symbolic self becomes a questionable subject in process, since symbolic signification is at least doubled by its immanent heterogeneity; the discharge of the rejected drives of the body, that is, sets symbolic signification in motion into a signifying process.

Kristeva's view of the subject is thus a questionable subject in process, a term derived from the French 'en procès', in which it has a legal meaning,

[37] Marcia Ian, *Remembering the Phallic Mother: Psychoanalysis Modernism and the Fetish* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1993).

denoting a legal suit while also containing the more general meaning of a "forward motion possibly accompanied by transformations" (*Revolution* 1984, 17). Kristeva's subject in process thus refers to a view of the subject as undergoing a constant "unsettling" movement; its identity and place within the semiotic or symbolic disposition is thus questionable (126). As Kristeva observes, "The subject of logic is merely death, the arrested process" (229).

The thetic split or break designates the phase during the mirror stage, which marks the entry into the Symbolic order, when the symbolic identity position is taken on. According to Kristeva, however, this foundational positing of signification forms a dual bind of both "breaking away from" and "breaking into". Inasmuch as the positing of signification results from the insertion of the bodily drives of the maternal space into the Symbolic, therefore, the thetic marks a "breaking away from" the maternal space. With the Symbolic order totally subsumed under the Law of the Father, its prohibition of desire for the Mother pushes for its sublimation into the Symbolic paternal structure. With entry into the Symbolic, therefore, the maternal sense of self is rejected as "other"; with everything pertaining to the maternal and the body thus being defiled as abject. Although the thetic marks the beginning of the process of abjection of the maternal, the latter, as previously explicated, still "breaks into" the Symbolic, which it nourishes and contributes to forming, to produce a questionable subject in process. According to Kristeva, rejected matter from the maternal hence remains integral to the signifying process as its nurturing source; in other words, the maternal lives on within the Symbolic as a subterranean force of the bodily abject, which returns as a bodily discharge of the drives to disrupt Symbolic signification to produce what Kristeva refers to as the sense or signifiance of the maternal, which signifies beyond signification.

Grounded in Kristeva's theory of a "questionable subject in process" is her view of the phenomenon of intertextuality as resulting from a transposition of signifying systems. As explained by Kristeva, "every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an intertextuality)" (60), due to the reactivation of the semiotic drives within signification; she describes this process as "that liquefying and dissolving agent that does not destroy but rather reactivates new organizations and in that sense affirms" (109). In this way, the semiotic challenges identity, signification and the social order all in one. Kristeva coined the term "transposition" to clarify that her theory of intertextuality dismisses the very notion of origin so that it concerns not only the area of poetry but applies to all forms of texts (Worton *Cross-References* 1986, 14; Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 60).

Again, from Kristeva's perspective, there can be different outcomes of the mirror phase of separation from the maternal space when the symbolic

identity position is taken on. The two possible outcomes of this process are defined by Kristeva as either that of father identification or of mother identification. Father identification is when the subject fully assumes the symbolic self with an unquestioning acceptance of the unified sense of self it offers. In accord with the Law of the Father, the father-identifying subject is thus oblivious to the essential truth of the "split subject in language", of the subject's twilight state of existence as a subject in process, as a subject of both body and the symbolic self. This being so, father-identifying subjects are socially well integrated.

Mother identification, on the other hand, is when the loss of the pre-symbolic maternal law of the body for entry into the Symbolic order is experienced as a trauma. Accordingly, the symbolic self with its rejection of maternal law is suffered as a force of death, as a murder of the soma (Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 253, 264-5, 271). Phallic prohibition of the maternal thus gives rise to a sense of loss, which in its turn creates a yearning, a desire for the pre-symbolic, in a vicious circle of enhanced desire for what is lost, which has become a memory only, an absence turned into an idealized fantasy. Desire for the pre-symbolic thus pushes for what lies beyond the phallic boundaries of the Law of the Father. Mother identification hence makes the subject a questioning, rebellious person, tending towards self-liberation, either through a life of excess or through creative activity (Kristeva *Soleil* 1987, 18-22; Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 100,163).

Kristeva thus explains creativity and rebelliousness as characteristic of mother identification in that they imply what she refers to as a "twilight" state. As noted above, in Kristeva's view, the subject "is always **both** semiotic **and** symbolic" (*Revolution* 1984, 24). However, only the mother-identifying creative rebellious, aspiring to existence under maternal law, are experientially aware of the truth of the split subject in language, of the "twilight" existence of the subject as a subject in process, a "repeated scission of matter" (167, 176). Accordingly, always in desire and pursuit of the lost blissful state of the maternal, the subject position of mother identification explains the creative impulse of an artist, traditionally referred to as the creative "daimon". Kristeva thus also argues for the idea of the Muse as an inner feminine force of creativity (Kristeva *Soleil* 1987, 198).

Further placing her theory of the questionable subject in process in a social historical context, Kristeva argues that with mother identification aspiring for existence under maternal law, it is characteristic of transitional epochs; according to Kristeva, with the weakened position of the Symbolic during such epochs, the disruptive force of desire for the idealized maternal space is set in motion, giving rise to a transposition of the reigning signifying system of the Symbolic order into another. Explained thus as resulting

from a discharge of the bodily drives, social rebellion exhibits the return of the abject maternal within the process of its abjection by the Symbolic under the Law of the Father.

As can be understood from the above, therefore, the thetic break or split which is to affect the unified subject position of the symbolic One under the Law of the Father is never absolute; according to Kristeva, there is always a residue of bodily drives within the subject, which remains "other" to the Law of the Father. In this manner, in Kristeva's terms we are "other than ourselves" in language.[38]

Kristeva's use of terms in her analyses of creativity, works of literary texts and other artistic production, also needs to be explained for a full grasp of the pertinence of her theory to this project, however. Her use of the terms jouissance, sublimation, the disruptive semiotic and catharsis will thus be delved into in the following.

Of primary importance in the context of the creatively inclined and of artistic production is Kristeva's use of the term jouissance. It is an ambiguous French word which Kristeva uses in all its ambiguity. For this reason, it is difficult to translate into English while maintaining its full implications. To maintain the ambiguity of the term, therefore, the French word jouissance will be used in this project. Roudiez, in his translation, however, utilizes the English term jouissance, which dates from the Renaissance, to maintain an ambiguity of meaning which makes the word applicable to both law and sex[39]. Although the French word *j'ouis* is the present indicative of the verb 'jouir', which means to enjoy with all its connotations, including the sexual, and jouissance also means sexual orgasm, Kristeva uses the French term *plaisir* for sensual, sexual pleasure. On the other hand, her use of the word jouissance covers a state of total joy and ecstasy without any mystical connotations. The ambiguity of Kristeva's application of the term derives from the implications of a homophonic play on words. Accordingly, the term *j'ouîs*, also means 'I hear', while *sens* means both 'a meaning'/'an 'understanding' and 'a sensation'. Kristeva uses the word *jouissance*, therefore, to refer to the state of 'total joy' and 'ecstasy' associated with the pre-symbolic maternal while simultaneously implying an understanding of its meaning as a heard/felt meaning, signifying beyond the signifier yet through it. This ambiguity of the term *jouissance* of course also affects its usage, in that it is used both to describe an immediate, inexpressible emotional experience

[38] As opposed to Hegel's theory. See "Absolute knowing," *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit.* Trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977) 479-493. See also Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism. The Satisfaction of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). See also Julian Roberts, "Hegel," *GermanPhilosophy. An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988) 68-121.

[39] Sherry Simon, *Gender and Translation. Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003) 96.

and an interpretive act of response to such an experience. For example, a poem written in a state of jouissance retains the trace of the discharge of its pre-symbolic drives as a sense that can be heard through the interstices of its significance. Here Kristeva spells the word *sens* with an 'e', as *sense* therefore, to create a connotative ambiguity which at once refers to a 'feeling' and 'an understanding of meaning'. Another such a play on words is Kristeva's term "signifiance", which also refers to an understanding of the implicit through the signifier.

As we have seen, in the context of the thetic break the term "sublimation" is employed to refer to the Aufhebung of the maternal pre-symbolic drives into the phallic Symbolic during the formation of a subject position within its order. In the context of creativity, however, sublimation refers to an act of self-liberation from paternal prohibition for the mother-identifying artist whose desire for the repressed pre-symbolic maternal space pushes for creative activity in defiance of the Law of the Father. A work of art is, in other words, an "ersatz", a substitute for the lost maternal. Created in a state of disruptive jouissance, it thus challenges the identity position of the Symbolic by exhibiting the process of abjection on which it feeds. Revelatory of the discharge of the pre-symbolic drives of jouissance of the creative act, a work of art, when viewed in this light, represents the workings of the pre-symbolic as a disruptive force in opposition to the Symbolic self within it (Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 114, 168, 266, 273). Exhibiting the paternal prohibition of the maternal, as previously mentioned, the self-reflective effects of creative sublimation signifies an act of self-liberation for the artist; creative sublimation, that is, provides relief from the repressed abject desire for the maternal space thus released in creative activity, which gives catharsis. Catharsis, however, is also given to the enjoyer of the "ersatz" object of creative sublimation, for whom a confrontation with the repressed in the "ersatz" gives rise to a similar feeling of self-liberation as does the creative activity itself.

With the basis of Kristeva's semiotic theory being psychoanalytic, as already noted, Symbolic language is held to be phallic in that it is under the Law of the Father; in other words, an acceptance of the phallic prohibition of desire for the mother is the precondition for entry into the Symbolic order. Kristeva thus argues that patriarchal cultures censor the feminine force in language through various fetishistic processes, depending on the social system. In capitalism, for example, the feminine is reduced to displaying itself through the image of a "femme fétiche", to the exclusion of the maternal. In Kristeva's view, patriarchy maintains its power over and against the truth of nature as the natural order is reversed through the power of language, whereby woman is defined for the purpose of serving the reigning system in accordance with the Law of the Father. For example, in capital-

ism woman is defined to profit the system of industrial production so that motherhood and wifehood are thus repressed; the true potential of woman is, in other words, reduced by the social system which feeds on the dependent position of woman. Within capitalism, therefore, the truly feminine is transferred to serve the system as sublimated desire. Thus, as explained by Kristeva, capitalism maintains its power through desire sublimated into language (Kristeva *Révolution* 1974, 451-461; Chanter *Revolt* 2005, 3, 6-8).

We have already noted in the above that the discharge of the pre-symbolic drives of jouissance leaves a trace or mark in the work of art during the creative act. In the following, there are therefore some examples of what form such traces or marks might take in works of art.

Hence, since colors are perceived by the subject before the thetic break, references to colors in literary texts or poetry are interpretable as the mark or trace of the pre-thetic, of the pre-symbolic maternal in the process of becoming. With blue being the earliest color perceived by a baby, however, and moreover with its being a color which, like the sun, must not be looked at directly, it especially connotes the threshold state of the creatively inclined[40] in artistic production.

Other forms of the mark or trace of sublimation of the pre-symbolic maternal in works of literature are references to all that pertains to fluidity or movement; for example, streams or waves of light, or of water; other examples are references to what cannot be looked at directly, such as the sun or, as previously mentioned, the color blue, in that they are suggestive of a return to the pre-thetic where phenomenal identity vanishes.

Descriptions of in-between phenomena like dusk or dawn, or flashes of light or fire, such as, for instance, the stars or the moon, which are traditionally associated with the maternal and with creativity, are also interpretable as revelatory of creative sublimation. In other words, the semiotic iconicity of a literary text is thus suggestive of the process of creative sublimation of the pre-symbolic maternal which produced it. Hence, references to the intangible particles of dust floating in sunlight, descriptions of scenes with music and dance, or of silence conveyed as a listening, as a *j'ouïs-sense*, are suggestive of the creative process of sublimation into the narrative in that they connote an opening up of the symbolic, conveying a sense from beyond its boundaries. In this regard, intermediality is a component of the literary intertext.[41]

[40] Shane Strange, Jen Webb, Eds. *Creative Manoeuvres: Writing, Making, Being*. (Cambridge: *Cambridge Scholars* Publishing, 24 July 2014) 1-17.

[41] On the connection "intermediality"-"intertextuality" see Klaus Bruhn Jensen, "Text and Intertextuality;" Wolfgang Donsbach Ed. *International Encyclopedia of Communication,* 2008. Retrieved from: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/9781118766804.wbiect170 (retrieved June 27, 2020).

Regarding the explication of the semiotics of Lacan which follows, his uncompromising dismissal of "understanding" within the Symbolic order as easy reductionism (Fink 1997, 71) makes the prospect of briefly explaining his terminology self-contradictory, if only for the purpose of clarifying its use in this project. Moreover, though admittedly his seminars were directed at very heterogeneous audiences, nevertheless his discourse generally appears in purely clinical contexts; hence it needs to be emphasized that his theory is merely used in this project as a method of reading for an increased enjoyment of Hardy's fiction. With respect to Lacan's view of "true understanding" as a process on the border of the symbolic and the real, as a 'glimpsing' of that which resists symbolization (71), the terms of his theory used in this project will be very briefly defined here.

The Real, the Symbolic order and Reality are at the very basis of Lacan's psychoanalytic theory. According to Lacan it is language which brings things into existence, so that "existence is a product of language" (25). Essentially linguistic, the Symbolic order regulates desire in accordance with the Law of the Father in the Oedipus complex. In other words, the Symbolic order is the realm of culture as against the imaginary of nature; it is the realm into which the infant is coaxed into compliance with social behavioral norms during the process of socialization. As Fink explicates: "Thinking always begins from our position within the Symbolic order*"* (24).

On the other hand, the realm of the infant preceding its immersion into the Symbolic is referred to as the Real. It is the infant's experience of life; it is body as an "unbroken erogenous zone" (24). The infant's immersion into the Symbolic, however, involves a cancelling out of the Real, since the Symbolic creates reality as that which is named by language. Though in this sense the Real does not exist, the fact of it being an experience of life which precedes language means, according to Lacan, that it may be better understood as "*that which has not yet been symbolized*, remains to be symbolized, or even resists symbolization; and it may perfectly well exist "alongside", and in spite of a speaker's considerable linguistic capabilities." (25). It is the unspoken which signifies in relation to the symbolized. While every person's reality is different depending on the socio-cultural context and the person's experiences, it exists within the Symbolic. However, there are two levels of the Real: a pre-symbolic level before the letter, and a level after the letter, as a sort of residue which is generated by the Symbolic. Both levels affect the Symbolic, however, as each in its own way generate meanings beyond the level of symbolic signification. The meaning generated by the Real from within the Symbolic is thus revelatory of the truth about the subject's desire as prohibited desire – the truth which can only ever be partly revealed, as the half-said within the Symbolic.

In Lacan's theory, the Other is the pre-established linguistic place into which we are born, in whose language we must learn to articulate our needs. Nevertheless, according to Lacan, preceding the assimilation of language, the child immersed in a space of sensory immediacy and inarticulate needs cannot be said even to know what it wants. The meaning of its needs, that is, is contingent upon how it is interpreted by the surroundings. In this manner, the child assimilates the Other as language in order to articulate its needs and desires and thence to be able to communicate. The Other thus translates the child's inarticulate wishes and needs into socially understandable terms; thus, determined by others, the expression of our needs and desires in the medium of their language transforms them into an experience of the Other. Thus, as Fink expresses it, "it is language that, while allowing desire to come into being, ties knots therein, and makes us such that we can both want and not want one and the same thing, never be satisfied when we get what we thought we wanted, and so on" (7). Moreover, with the child's assimilation of language, which marks its immersion into the Symbolic order, when, as Fink writes, "the body is overwritten/overridden by language" (12), its desire for the mother is equated with that of the Other. It is thus designated by Lacan as the (m)Other (7).

As quoted in many studies of literature with reference to Lacan, he states that the unconscious is language; it is structured like a language which obeys its own grammar and logic, over which the ego has no command. According to Lacan, the unconscious thus operates upon the basis of text and textuality, through metaphor and metonymy, yet through a process outside of our control, beyond intentionality. Operating within the Other, or within the Symbolic order, it is swayed by desire to become the object of desire of the Other; the desire of the Other is, however, equivalent to the presumed object of desire of the mother, identified as the mother's "want-to-be" in her "lack of being" within the phallic signification; in other words, it is driven by the desire to become an object of desire for the (m)Other. Thus, obeying the dynamics of desire, the unconscious also obeys the desire of the Other as comprehended from miscellaneous views, wishes or hopes expressed by others, internalized and taken as being its own (9-12). Signifying beyond denotative meaning of the phallic signifier, the unconscious is the language of repressed desire for the truth of its being in lack, in and through the signifier.

According to Lacan, the insertion into the Symbolic is made possible by what he refers to as the Imaginary. Thus, on separation from the maternal space in preparation for insertion into the Symbolic order, the narcissistic drives push to supplant the lost wholeness of the maternal with symbolic being. With the idealized memory of the lost maternal space being a mere fantasy, therefore, it is referred to by Lacan as the Imaginary. The Imagi-

nary is thus what causes the subject, desiring "completeness", to accept the "second order jouissance" which the idealized self-image of the Symbolic offers. With the Imaginary originating in narcissism, the subject takes on the subject position of the Symbolic as "a being of desire" (60-61).

However, with the prohibition of desire for the maternal space, which marks the immersion into the Symbolic order under the Law of the Father, the self is alienated from its "self", as this entry is effectuated by a splitting of the self in language. Owing to this splitting, the subject, in a state of self-alienation in language, is situated between language and jouissance; in other words, while its substance exceeds its symbolic function, the splitting affects desire for the lost wholeness of its substance beyond the Symbolic. As Lacan maintains, the Cartesian self is "false being", nurtured by repression of the Real which exceeds it.

In Lacan's theory, the gaze is complex to define as a concept, as it implies an understanding, in Lacan's sense of the term, as a grasping of its sense in the form of an "oscillation". As Lacan came to explicate it, as a metaphor for the narcissistic workings of the phallic function, it is an appropriate metaphor to use in the context of this study of Hardy's fiction. As with some of Lacan's other metaphors, however, its sense is best grasped through the process of understanding its application to Hardy's text.

In its psychoanalytic context, however, Lacan explicates it as follows. Prohibitive of the child's fundamental incestual desire for the mother, the phallic offers a symbolic Ideal self to win her desire. The child, therefore, on discovering the mother's desire for the symbolic phallus she lacks, seeks to become the "object" of the mother's desire. It is thus through an imaginary identification with the mother's want-to-be that desire for the mother pushes the child to take on the identity of the "Ideal self" within the Symbolic order, that is, to desire to become what the mother desires. While this transference of desire forms the very basis of the formation of subjectivity, it gives rise to a splitting of the subject; that is, while desire for and of the mother is the constitutive source of the Symbolic self, it can never be fulfilled within the phallic symbolic as it is prohibited under the Law of the Father. The gaze is thus a metaphor for the narcissistic process whereby the subject's desire for recognition in the Name of the Father is set in motion through a projection of the Imaginary. The guiding gaze of the Symbolic order, or the Other, therefore, implies the impossibility of a complete articulation of being in terms of the Other. As Lacan explicates in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* (2010): "In so far as the gaze, *qua objet a*, may come to symbolize this central lack expressed in the phenomenon of castration, and in so far as it is an *objet a* reduced, of its nature, to a punctiform, evanescent function, it leaves the subject in ignorance as to what there is beyond the

appearance, an ignorance so characteristic of all progress in thought that occurs in the way constituted by philosophical research" (77).

Further exemplifying the experience of the gaze in expressionist art, Lacan explains that the relationship "between the painter and the spectator, is a play, a play of *trompe l'oeil* […] A triumph of the gaze over the eye" (103). What is presented to the spectator, that is, "provides something by way of a certain satisfaction – in the sense in which Freud uses the term in relation to the drive – of a certain satisfaction of what is demanded by the *gaze*" (101). Or, as explained by Bruce Fink in *The Lacanian Subject* (1997): "Desire has no 'object' as such. It has a cause; a cause that brings it into being, that Lacan dubs object (a), cause of desire [the] placing in parenthesis of the 'object' […] is a sign of the 'object's' transposition from the imaginary register to the real" (91). Thus, Fink further explains, "It is the Other's desire as pure desirousness – manifested in the Other's gaze at something or someone, but distinct from that something or someone – that elicits desire" (91).

A distinguishing mark of Lacan's psychoanalytical theory, however, is his view of the impossible sexual relationship which is based on the idea that woman is not whole within the phallic structure of the Symbolic. According to Lacan, therefore, there can be no sexual relationship between the sexes in the sense of a "direct relationship", because within the Symbolic, "man" and "woman" do not "interact" in desire for each other, as such. The idealized memory of prohibited pre-Oedipal jouissance gets in the way; within the phallic structure, this fantastic memory of the maternal space as a "wholeness" determines the relationship of desire (Fink 1997, 60-62, 106-112). Thus, whereas the "sexual relationship" is determined by the Symbolic while the jouissance sought for is outside its field, the "sexual relationship" is in fact an "impossible sexual relationship" (Lacan *Encore* 1999. 112). As expressed by Lacan: "It's a question of metaphor" (112), for the partner of the "sexual relationship" remains the Other, while the true object of desire is for the pre-Oedipal maternal; hence, as Lacan has it, true love is fundamentally asexual. Or, as he expresses it: "Woman serves a function in the sexual relationship only *quo* mother" (35). As he also maintains, "woman" is not whole as defined within the phallic structure, as there is always something in her that escapes discourse (35). A "woman" is not necessarily of the female sex, however, as Lacan observes: "When any speaking being whatsoever situates itself under the banner 'woman' it is on the basis of the following – that it grounds itself as being not whole in situating itself in the *phallic function*"(72). Because "she" is not whole, therefore, there is no such thing as Woman in the sense of a universal (73). Being not whole due to the nature of words, "she" has a supplementary jouissance to the so-called phallic (gen-

ital) jouissance (73). This is what Lacan refers to as a feminine jouissance, which is beyond the post-Oedipal phallic, and therefore it is asexual. Lacan thus sees "woman" as being of the realm of truth and the infinite; with *feminine jouissance* as asexual ecstasy, it is a form of mysticism, which gives rise to bouts of creativity, rebelliousness and mystic experiences (103). In the field of Lacanian semiotic theory, therefore, the jouissing substance refers to the trace of surplus feminine jouissance which signifies beyond the Symbolic in works of art or literature. For Lacan, moreover, insofar as real art articulates sublimation by "offering to the eye" the residual drive that exists in excess of the phallic function, it produces catharsis in the "enjoyer" of art; in extension, real art may contribute to maintaining social stability.[42]

Once again, the supplemental explication of Kristeva and Lacan's terminology above is given with the sole aim of assisting readers to grasp the full implications of its use in the context of this project. However, the additional term "trans-conscious communication" utilized in the context of Kristeva and Lacan's conceptions of catharsis also needs to be defined here, as it will be used in the latter part of this study. Though it is not used by either of the two theorists as it is originally a term of alchemy taken up by Carl G. Jung in his psychological theory, it is in a sense applicable to their view of creative catharsis in that it refers to a mystical process of communication resulting from a psychological union of the conscious and the unconscious. In other words, it refers to a semi-conscious state, a semi-conscious form of communication. It is thus mystical in that its process is not amenable to scientific proof or explanation. Since the term trans-conscious communication refers to a semi-conscious act of communication rather than describing, as catharsis does, a state of being, or the result of such a state on a recipient, it is at times more effective for conveying the process of catharsis as it is used in this project. As mentioned above, the term is equally applicable to both Kristeva and Lacan's conceptions of catharsis

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Structure and summary of the thesis

With this study of Hardy's novels being essentially intertextual, it is thematic rather than plot-oriented, insofar as its emphasis lies on demonstrating the way in which the narrative structure reveals an underlying meaning beyond the workings of the plot. It is thus divided into four parts, with each part considering from a different perspective how underlying views and notions of Hardy's reading on creativity and the artistic disposition reveal themselves in his novels. Each part has a similar structure, with subsections beginning with a presentation of explicit narrative references to the features referred to

[42] Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis.* Trans. Alan Sheridan. Ed. Jacques Alain Miller (London and New York: Karnac, 1977) 111-112.

above, then exemplifying in various ways the palimpsestic effect of interspersed pictorial, symbolic passages of similar configurations from the novels studied, disregarding their year of publication. Such passages are studied at a superficial level to exemplify some of the shared underlying themes between the earlier and the later novels. Finally, the later sections present a socio-symbolic level of interpretation of passages in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), exemplifying their shared covert self-reflective narrative, which is understood as communicating a covert social critique by exhibiting the repressive workings of the Symbolic order.

The thesis is thus composed of four parts, each of which is divided into various subsections. Part 1, with the subtitle, "Language, Representation, Identity", is divided into two subsections, "Patriarchal dimensions" and "Unconscious inflections". It presents an intertextual reading of Hardy's novels in Kristeva's sense of the term, supporting the view of their underlying theme of creativity beyond the workings of the plot. In connection with this it demonstrates how the narrative can be understood as revelatory of the effects of the paternal prohibition of language on identity. Part II is subtitled "Artistic Natures" and it is divided into the three subsections, "Iconic ruptures", "Impossible relationships" and "Pictorial variation of signifiance". Part II analyzes the characters in an intertextual perspective with a focus on the narrative signs indicating their artistic natures. Moreover, it presents a reading of the unfulfilled relationships in Hardy's novels as suggestive of the creative dispositions of the characters as driven by the impossible desire for an idealized love object. Part II also highlights the iconicity of Hardy's narrative exhibiting a propensity for visionary states as a distinguishing mark of the creatively inclined. The pictorial passages are here also interpreted as "iconic projections" exhibiting these characters' insights into the deeper meaning of life, manifested as a sixth sense, characteristic of artistic natures. Part III is subtitled "Narrative Strategies" and it is divided into the three subsections, "The textual unconscious", "Narrative jouissance" and "Narcissistic attraction and narrative ambiguity". This part analyzes select passages of poetic intensity in the novels that can be interpreted as revelatory of various effects of Hardy's creative cathartic sublimation in writing. The third subsection, "Narcissistic attraction and narrative ambiguity", moreover, presents an in-depth analysis of pictorial manifestations of the characters' desire, conveying the state of specular fascination and Lacan's view of "the impossible sexual relationship". Part IV is subtitled "The Ache of Modernism" and it is divided into six short subsections. The first, which is subtitled, "Ambiguous figures", highlights the character portrayals of gender ambiguity interpreted as revealing the trace of semiotic disruption that figuratively exhibits a sense beyond denotation. The second subsec-

tion, subtitled "Palimpsestic spaces of time", presents a study of Hardy's text in terms of its palimpsestic spaces of time interpreted as suggestive of the sense of a social critique. The third section subtitled "Traces of the process of abjection", demonstrates the effects of the social positioning of woman in patriarchy with an emphasis on how these effects are made apparent through the character-portrayal of Tess. The fourth section subtitled "Effects of paternal prohibition", presents a reading of the iconicity in Hardy's novels interpreted as the trace of the disruptive semiotic revelatory of Hardy's creative cathartic sublimation in writing. The narrative iconicity is thus understood as suggestive of the sense of an artist's experience of the Symbolic order, which is that of a patriarchy obeying the Law of the Father. The fifth subsection is subtitled "Effects of a transitional epoch in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891)", and it presents a study of passages in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* revelatory of the trace of the disruptive semiotic resulting from the effects of a transitional epoch on people's lives. The sixth and final subsection, subtitled "Anticlimactic endings", features a contrastive study of the endings of the two novels *Desperate Remedies* (1871) and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), demonstrating how the endings of these novels, each in its own way, can be understood as ambiguous.

PART I
LANGUAGE, REPRESENTATION, IDENTITY

1. Patriarchal dimensions

Considering the previously discussed evidence provided in Hardy's annotations and the notes of his notebooks, apparently made at random, his major interests can be held to have comprised questions about creativity and the nature of language. As we have argued, moreover, being of an artistic bent himself, Hardy's personal experience of being an author clearly must have determined the focus of his reading. In support of the hypothesis that Hardy's reading left traces in his writing, therefore, an intertextual reading of Hardy's novels in Kristeva's sense of the term is used in this part to determine the presence of the underlying theme of the issues of identity, creativity and language, with an overall impression of their interdependence in the social order under paternal Law.

Reading Hardy intertextually in Kristeva's sense of the term, then, it can be shown that the problems of creativity explicitly referred to in some of Hardy's novels as an incidental issue in fact form an important underlying theme. In what follows, I will illustrate how the issue of creativity, and its supplemental question of the inhibiting mechanism of the reigning social order, reveal themselves beyond the workings of the plot in Hardy's novels, through their signifiance[43] of poetic prose. My reading of Hardy's novels as text, that is, aligns itself with a view of reading expressed in his *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985):

> It is the primitive and uncultivated part in us that engages itself exclusively with the plot; our finer compounds find their pleasure up the avenues off the main road […] we may be profoundly interested in the storyteller's personal philosophy and in the subtle indications, which sometimes unawares, he gives us of what life has been, and his ideals scurvy or sublime. And again there may be in the manner of his telling an individual grace and dignity, a rhythm that, like music, charms irrelevantly since it has nothing to do with the denouement**,** or whether the man and the maid married at last. (Vol. 2, 288-9).

[43] Toril Moi, *The Kristeva Reader* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1986) 28-9. See also Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language.* Trans. Margaret Waller. Ed. S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1984) 17. Kristeva's term signifiance refers to the trace of the articulation of the drives not reducible to the language system in a text

The view of reading endorsed in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* recognizably corresponds with the form of reading of Hardy's novels proposed above for the purposes of this project.

The issue of creativity in Hardy's novels is in fact explicitly referred to in the narrative of two of his earliest novels. While this appears incidental in the references made to the issue in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), the question of creativity forms an integral part of the action in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), although apparently as merely a subplot. Thematically, as we shall see, however, *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) contains within it an embryonic version of *Jude the Obscure* (1896) as an oblique criticism of the social realm's obeying the Law of the Father. Suggestive of the force of abjection operating the Symbolic order, that is, *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) exhibits the disruptive power of feminine jouissance as a residual force, in excess of the phallic Symbolic and challenging its boundaries.

As mentioned in the above, therefore, the issue of creativity is explicitly taken up in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) when the characters Cytherea Graye and Edward Springrove discuss the subject of poets and fame. In this discussion, Edward, the disillusioned poet (18, 35), explains to Cytherea that poets remain unknown "if their ideas have been allowed to flow with a sympathetic breadth. Famous only if they have been convergent and exclusive" (36). It seems here that Springrove expresses the view of an underlying theme in Hardy's novels, namely the idea of the prohibitive function of the reigning social order on artistic expression.

Moreover, the idea of the artist as a disruptive force in society is also stated, this time by Edward's father, who is described as a poet "with a rough skin", being likened to Whitman (101). Apparently having an artistic bent himself, Edward's father laments his son's artistic inclination, which he fears will only give him trouble in life (106). It appears that he understands his son's artistic need for the "perfections in things" (107), which might make him ever discontented with life. What worries Edward's father, in other words, is the inherent rebelliousness of the artist that he identifies in his son; he fears that Edward's "intellectual independence" (33) will make it difficult for him to accord with the demands of the social order.

As mentioned above, the subject of art and artistic practice forms one of the subplots of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), as it deals with the question of novel writing. The novel seems to exhibit an implicit critique of the prohibitive climate within the literary circles of Hardy's time, communicated through the character Knight. Knight is a man of high rank and learning, who aggressively criticizes Elfride's novelette, whose female authorship, which he detects through the male pseudonym, seems to make his attack the more vehement. As previously discussed, Hardy's experience with liter-

ary critics was exacting, and, as Michael Millgate notes more generally in his essay, "Thomas Hardy: the biographical sources" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 7-8), an undercurrent of resentment towards the well-read upper classes is detectable in the novel, in which Elfride appears to be the image of Hardy's wife to be, Emma Gifford (6-7). The more general resentment evidently noted by Millgate, however, also suggests that parallels can be drawn between Elfride's situation with Knight and Hardy's own experience of publishers, for there is indubitably an undertone of condemnation that is conveyed through the narrative, suggesting a sweeping disapproval of Knight's literary stand. Accordingly, as Suzanne Keen observes when commenting on Hardy's reading of *The Passions of the Human Soul* (1851) by Fourier, in his "extrapolation" of Fourier's thought as applied to the characters of his novels, Knight comes across as "an impossible monster of the intellect" (*Hardy's Brains* 2014, 31). Indeed, a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) appears an appropriate pointer to the issue actually at stake in the novel: "It has happened not seldom in the history of the world that the work of a truly great artist has startled men into reconsidering their accepted standards of art, & dumbly asking themselves, as they contemplate that which fills them at once with admiration and disgust is, after all, only the rancor of conservatism against the innovator" (Vol. 2, 203). As Knight himself admits at one point in the novel, his knowledge of men and women was just "a mass of generalities" (*Desperate* 1871, 104). Quite a few such commentaries in the narrative contribute to substantiating a critical view of Knight's philosophical bent, conveying an idea of him as a hollow, unreflecting store of learning. Accordingly, as Elfride describes him: "When he spoke at some length […] there was a square decisiveness in the shape of his sentences, as if, unlike her own and Stephen's, they were not there and then constructed but were drawn from a large store ready-made" (*Blue Eyes* 1973, 123). Admittedly, Knight reads as being representative of patriarchal rule within the paternal realm with its disavowal of the inner, living force of the feminine, creative impulse. For Knight's purely theoretical knowledge of life is revealed in his judgment of literature and, as we shall see, in how it biases him in his judgment of Elfride, and of life in general. In accord with Hardy's personal categorization of people, Knight thus appears to have a limited capacity to comprehend anything beyond the "clean and pure" abstractions which form the frame of reference of his philosophical mind. Or, as expressed by Hardy: "You may regard a throng of people as containing a certain small minority who have sensitive souls; these, and the aspects of these, being what is worth observing. So, you divide them into the mentally unquickened, mechanical, soulless; and the living, throbbing, suffering vital. In other words, into souls and machines, ether and clay" (Millgate *Life*

1984, 192). Described in Lacanian terms, Knight is fully determined by the phallic function. Thus, he is wholly alienated within language (Fink 1997, 106). In Kristeva's terms, the general idea conveyed through the explicit references in the narrative to the problematic of artistic practice and an artistic inclination is that of the artist's perception of the paternal structures of the social order. In other words, as Hardy once expressed his own insight into life, we are all "caged birds; the only difference lies in the size of the cage. This too is part of the tragedy" (Millgate *Life* 1984, 171). As Jessica D. Notgrass contends in *Social Influences on the Female in Thomas Hardy* (2004), therefore, Hardy's novels can be understood to reveal the workings of the dominant social relations of his time, illustrating the pressure exerted on those who did not conform to the social norm.

In her thesis *Knowledge and Survival in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (2000), however, Jane Mattisson calls attention to Hardy's anti-rationalist bearing when referring to and quoting Robin Gilmour's view of Hardy's fiction as "a ratification of emotional and spiritual values in a society which is increasingly drifting towards scientific determinism" (11). Thereupon, Mattisson argues that the main concern in Hardy's novels is for the fate of agricultural laborers as a class of extinction. Nevertheless, according to Mattisson there is also a detectable concern in Hardy's fiction for the middle classes, whose purpose of existence as a group holding the key for the future seems to be questioned in his later novels (24). Undeniably there is a noticeable sympathy for the situation of the agricultural laborers and at times even for the middle classes in Hardy's fiction; stronger still, however, is the focus on the emotional needs of the individual, or, as D. H Lawrence wrote in his essay on Thomas Hardy, "A study of Thomas Hardy", "His private sympathy is always with the individual against the community: as is the case with the artist" (*Phoenix* 1956, 49).

In connection with the above-mentioned issues of creativity and the inherent rebelliousness of an artist is the experience of language as both restricting and potentially liberating. Such a view of language is sometimes explicitly referred to in Hardy's novels, as we shall see, especially in his earliest. Relevant to the question of Hardy's marked interest in issues of language, therefore, Norman Page notes, in his essay "Art and Aesthetics", Hardy's questioning of the tenets of representational art (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 52). Judging from Hardy's reading as reflected in his *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), his skepticism towards representational art evidently had to do with his awareness of the complexity of the questions involved. Hardy was clearly well informed on the philosophical question of the relationship of reality to language. Quoting Dennis Taylor in her work *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014), Suzanne Keen notes that Hardy's portrayal of his characters

shows a realization of the important influence of language in our self-perception and perception of life; as Dennis Taylor expresses it, Hardy's delineation of his characters illustrates "how language controls [their] consciousness" (16). For example, in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), the characters are portrayed as noticing the distorting and limiting effects of language on their experience of themselves and of life in general.[44] Thus, Cytherea reacts to the wording of her advertisement in the paper for employment: "It seemed a more material existence than her own that she saw thus delineated on the paper. 'That can't be myself; how odd I look!'" (14).

The view of the formative effect of language on our sense of self, on our coming to be "in language" as subjects "of language" (Fink 1997, 49), as maintained by Kristeva and Lacan, also appears in a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), albeit in different terms: "To-day the Folk cannot conceive the human being otherwise than in the uniform of his class […] It would be placed in the greatest bewilderment if one attempted to reconstruct before it the actual human being beneath the visible semblance" (Vol. 2, 403). Accordingly, when faced with the requirements for being a governess, Cytherea is shown to experience her employment as a traumatic condition of self-estrangement:

> The petty, vulgar details of servitude that she had just passed through, her dependence on the whims of a strange woman, the necessity of quenching all individuality of character in herself, and relinquishing her own peculiar tastes to help on the wheel of this alien establishment, made her sick and sad, and she almost longed to pursue some free, out-of-doors employment, sleep under trees or in a hut, and know no enemy but winter and cold weather like … birds and animals. (*Desperate* 1871, 52)

As Penny Boumelha argues in her essay, "The patriarchy of class: *Under the Greenwood Tree, Far from the Madding Crowd, The Woodlanders*", "differences – whether of class or gender – are clearly shown as products of history rather than of nature" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 133). In other words, implicitly conveying a social critique, language is here revealed as being subsumed under the paternal power structure of the social order, as the determining influence of language behind the apparently universal categories of class and gender is made evident. Herein exhibiting the effect of language on our self-identity, that is, the narrative exposes the social

[44] Lennart Björk, *The Literary Notebooks of Thomas Hardy.* Ed. (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985) 2 vols. Vol. I. Entries on the discrepancy between reality and how it comes across in language entry 891 (91), entries 1507-8 (199), entry 1496 (197), entry 1264 (145).

construction of status value. Indeed, in present-day terms, the extract manifests the view of our alienation in language; it alludes to the notion of the self as a "divided subject" in language, which is a notion about which Hardy was clearly well informed. As we have seen, it betrays the notion of the Cartesian subject as a "false being" (Fink 1997, 45,49).

More generally, the idea conveyed in Kristeva's terms is the Symbolic order as a paternal symbolic and imaginary order. On reading the ad, therefore, Cytherea's reaction on noting the transformative effect of language on her sense of self is suggestive of a nascent cognizance of the role of language in the construction of identity. Language is thus revealed in the narrative as serving the social system by contributing to the construction of a self-identity which destines the subject to serve as a cog in the wheel of the reigning social order. In this manner, Hardy's anti-realistic[45] stance pervades the narrative, where Cytherea's sense of self-alienation contradicts the very possibility of the view of language as a mirror image, as an undistorting representation of reality.

Another such narrative instance describes Cytherea's experience of being forced into marriage with Manston, whose passion for her inspires nothing but her pity. Thus, the narrative voice portrays her acquiescence in a distanced, rational tone to convey her determination to cope: "To marry this man was obviously the course of common sense, to refuse him was impolite temerity" (*Desperate* 1871, 185). Her reason for accepting is explained accordingly: "to provide herself with some place of refuge from poverty, and with means to aid her brother Owen" (187). Though these were the conditions of marriage for most women in the nineteenth century, Cytherea is shown to have difficulties with living up to such "heroic self-abnegation" (188). Already during the marriage ceremony Cytherea is unable to hide her emotions on glimpsing Edward in the distance, so much so, that Owen notices "those strange revivals of passions" in her (201). When her brother later reprimands her for not having been able to hide her feelings to at least keep up the appearances of being a good wife – "You should have been woman enough to control yourself" (202) – when he scolds her by calling attention to her "duty to society" (203), Cytherea answers in all honesty, in a harangue of self-defence against the requirements of society: "Yes – my duty to society […] But ah, Owen, it is difficult to adjust our outer and inner life with perfect honesty at all!" (203). Apparently, at the core of Cytherea's resistance is the characteristic inquisitiveness and rebelliousness of an artist emerging from her experience of life as mere appearance, for it is clearly the

[45] Lennart Björk, *The Literary Notebooks of Thomas Hardy.* Ed. (London Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985) 2 vols. Entries revelatory of Hardy's interest in the limitations of a rational apprehension of reality. Vol. 1, entry 1341 (162), entry 1403 (179), entry 1549 (206). Vol. 2 entries 2086-7 (108), entries 2097-9 and 2100-1 (109), entry 2109 (110). See also Michael Millgate, *Life and Work of Thomas Hardy* (London: Macmillan, 1984) 114.

consequence of her feeling of self-alienation which derives from her suffering from the inadequacy of language to express her full sense of the real; in other words, at a meta-narrative level Cytherea here appears an iconic projection of the insufficiency of words to fully convey one's inner sense of self, to comprehensively formulate and communicate one's inner experience. Cytherea thus attempts to describe her feeling:

> What do our own acquaintances care about us? Not much. I think of mine. Mine will now (do they learn all the wicked frailty of my heart in this affair), look at me, smile sickly, and condemn me. And perhaps, far in time to come, when I am dead and gone, some other's account, or some other's song, or thought, like an old one of mine, will carry them back to what I used to say, and hurt their hearts a little that they blamed me so soon. And they will pause just for an instant, and give a sigh to me, and think, "Poor girl!" believing they do great justice to my memory by this. But they will never, never realize that it was my single opportunity to existence, as well as of doing my duty, which they are regarding; they will not feel that what to them is but a thought, easily held in those two words of pity, "Poor girl!" was a whole life to me; as full hours, minutes, and peculiar minutes, of hopes and dreads, smiles, whisperings, tears, as theirs: that it was my world, what is to them their world, and they in that life of mine, however much I cared for them, only as the thought I seem to them to be. *Nobody can enter into another's nature truly, that's what is so grievous.* (my emphasis 203)

Interpretable in Lacanian terms, Cytherea's experience hence calls forth the sense of the fundamental split, as Fink translates it in *the Lacanian Subject* (1997), "between conscious and unconscious, between an ineluctably false sense of self and the automatic functioning of language (the signifying chain) in the unconscious" (45). Such a reading of Cytherea's expressed experience, that is, invites comparison with the Lacanian view of "true understanding" as a process. Or, as Lacan himself puts it, "something takes place at the border of the symbolic and the real which has nothing to do with understanding, as it is commonly understood" (71). In other words, with the Cartesian view of the subject and understanding thus problematized by means of Cytherea's reflections, the narrative also manifests Hardy's perhaps unconscious questioning of the mode of representation of Realism, whose tenets, as we have seen, he ardently rejected. Instead, as Norman Page and Linda Shires argue in their essays in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy* (1999), Hardy favoured a personal mode of expression which included a destabilizing of language and the use of silence to carry the sense of hidden meanings (Kramer 1999, 38, 158). As a Hardy note quoted

in Margaret Higonnet's "Introduction" (1998) to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) reads: "A very good way of looking at things would be to regard everything as having an actual or false name, and an intrinsic or true name, to ascertain which all endeavour should be made […] The fact is that all things are falsely or inadequately named." (xxiv).

The issue of interpretation is similarly conveyed in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) by way of the character Knight, who is introduced in his role as a literary critic and man of high learning in a strikingly ambiguous manner. Presented from the perspective of Stephen, when describing his highly admired tutor and friend to Elfride (48-9, 56, 58-9), the idea conveyed is almost that of a divinity. For, to begin with, Knight appears as an invisible presence in the narrative, depicted as a creator, whose instruction has led Stephen to a social rebirth into a higher social class (56, 70-1). Knight is further likened to a divinity, portrayed as "a stranger with neither name nor shape" (117), whose verdict of Elfride's novelette in the form of an anonymous public text in *The Present* suggests the absolute stance of the voice of authority. Nevertheless, Elfride is shown to react violently against this judgement of her writing, feeling misunderstood (118). Although, as she explains, "one part of his estimate she respects", yet she finds it "more vexing to be misunderstood than to be misrepresented" (118). Read as being representative of the judgmental voice of the paternal authority of the social order with its belief in absolutes, Knight's stance is surreptitiously questioned, however, as he is continually shown to misjudge his surroundings. Hence, not only is Elfride repeatedly misinterpreted or misunderstood by Knight (239, 140, 146, 252, 293), but even Stephen falls victim to this, complaining of "[Knight's] misconstruction of his motives" (289). Accordingly, the authority of the paternal stance on issues of language as of literary quality, which Knight most evidently stands for, is efficiently destabilized throughout the narrative, thus conveying a view in line with a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985):

> There have been few, if any, more pregnant causes for errors in philosophy than the tendency to make words things, by projecting named abstractions of the mind into nature and entities, & thereafter treating them as if they were active agents there. We misapprehend nature, & then make our misapprehensions principles or entities in it (Vol. 1, 199).

Though Knight may be well-read and a man of learning, his inexperience makes him unprepared for the subtle nuances and inconsistencies of reality. On learning that Elfride is not the person he thought she was, Knight thus reflects on his situation: "It cankered his heart to think he was confronted by the closest instance of a worse state of things than any he had assumed in the

pleasant social philosophy and satire of his essays" (*Blue Eyes* 1873, 276). An outright condemnation of Knight's stance as a voice of authority, however, is made by Mrs. Swancourt, who criticizes Knight for his article, which he has written solely, as she says, "upon the strength of another man's remark, without having tested it by practice" (246). More generally conveyed through the critical portrayal of Knight as a man of authority and learning, therefore, is the view of language and a purely theoretical knowledge of life as both limited and insufficient in their capacity to give an accurate representation and complete understanding of the multifarious complexity of reality.

In the much later novel, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), with a special emphasis on the issue of language and identity, Tess, in contrast to Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), is an educated young woman of rural lower-class origin. In a like manner to the delineation of Knight's erudition, the impact of education on Tess's life is problematized, being shown to set her apart from her family and her rural community. Judging from Dale Kramer's study of Hardy's personal development and life, however, Hardy's own rise in social class as a result of his education was not an entirely positive experience, as we have previously mentioned. In other words, Hardy's personal development as a result of his education brought with it a sense of isolation and of not belonging to either of the two worlds in his life, that of his rural lower-class past, and that of the upper middle classes of which he aspired to become an integral part. It seems, therefore, that Hardy has transposed his experience of the adverse effects of education into his portrayal of Tess (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 12). Regarding Hardy's apparent, yet not necessarily conscious identification with his protagonist, it is interesting to note that this is a female character. Indeed, critics tend to comment on Hardy's very special relationship with his heroine, so that, as A. Alvarez reflects in the "Introduction" (1978) to the Penguin classics version of the novel: "Hardy seems to forget that Tess is a character in his own fiction and begins to talk about her like an old love" (*Tess* 1978, 22). In other words, his evident empathy with his character's feeling of self-alienation as the consequence of her personal development through her education is perhaps in sympathy with the feminist cause, to impart the full implications of its movement. The plights of Tess, that is, certainly reveal the impossibility of fighting for a cause at an individual level; Tess's education, her strength, perseverance and many other qualities are of no help to her against the repressive forces of patriarchy. Thus, Tess's education is shown to generate a disparity between mother and daughter, where Tess, feeling "mentally older than her mother" (*Tess* 1891, 88), is unable to communicate with her at all, for "when they were together the Jacobean and the Victorian ages were juxtaposed [as if there were a gap of about 200 years between them]" (61). In another part of

the novel, Tess is shown to discover the necessity of adapting her language to the person she is addressing; in other words, she has to determine whether to speak in dialect or not to avoid being stigmatized. (58). As Margaret Higonnet observes in her "Introduction" (1998) to the novel, Tess "attracts contradictory and deceptive readings […] not only from Angel and Alec but also from the narrator, who refutes yet/reimposes 'men's language' as a measure of her identity" (xxv). For if Tess's education has contributed to the development of her language and perception of life, she is still the same woman in the eyes of her surroundings, trapping her in the deadlock of conventional stereotypes of gender and class assumptions. Largely as a result of her education, therefore, Tess's sense of identity has been seriously shaken, to the extent that she is no longer fully integrated in the Symbolic order. Thus, in the terms of Lacan's theory, she is a victim of the transitional epoch she is living in as an educated young woman, and Tess's experience of life can be understood as communicating the sense of woman's state of ex-sistence; it can be held to convey the idea of the in-between subject position of woman within the phallic Symbolic order.

In yet another passage of *Desperate Remedies* (1871), however, uncertainty as to whether experience can be rendered in language is conveyed through Cytherea, who is given what she perceives as a misrepresentation of her romance with Edward on the boat (37), first by Edward's cousin and lover, Adelaide (99), then by Edward himself (330). Even so, Cytherea's version of the event is also given, as she corrects Edward's, and makes it correspond to that of the original event, as described by the narrative voice (37, 330). The reader is thus encouraged to question the previously supposed objectivity of the third-person, omniscient point of view of the first portrayal of the event, to shift perspectives and assume, though on much shakier grounds, that this version might have rendered Cytherea's view of the event all along. In this manner, the issue of objectivity is problematized by the narrative, exposing the reader to the disquieting effects of a narrative shiftiness which causes confusion about which of the stories in fact depicts the actual event. Hence, the issues of objective representation and the transparency of language are highlighted and implicitly disputed by the narrative through its delineation of Cytherea's insight into the problems of representation.

The power of language, how words affect our very conception of life, is thus forcefully conveyed through the description of Cytherea's shock on hearing Adelaide's disparaging portrayal of Cytherea's little romance on the boat. Moreover, the idea of the real as always eluding the static form of words is likewise suggested, communicating, as formulated in a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), that "Man is bathed in an ocean of sensations […] these form all that he can know of the world" (Vol.

2, 125). The uncertainty as to the truth of Cytherea's romantic encounter, created by the various versions of it, with no real indication as to which is objectively true, more generally also suggests the idea that all attempts at describing reality are essentially subjective. As we have seen, however, the representation of reality in language is shown to affect the characters' very experience of it, as exemplified by Cytherea's dismay on hearing the story of her meeting with Edward as told by Adelaide. In this regard, Suzanne Keen's line of argumentation in her study of Hardy's narrative techniques in *Hardy's Brains* (2014) agrees well with mine when she claims, "[they] support his demonstration of human psychology, an affective […] psychology evolved to feel, often incapable of knowing its own mind" (71). Keen thus exemplifies her view on Hardy's narrative strategies, whereby he demonstrates how "Wrong certainties about others can be as influential as right ones" (72).

Undeniably, although 'psychological realism' was the more generally accepted narrative technique of his time, Hardy used it with restraint, to the extent that his narration struck his contemporaries as unusual (Keen 2014, 53-58, 66, 75; Lothe "Variants on genre", Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 127-128). It is tempting to speculate, although difficult to ascertain, that he favored the more complex narrative method of varied perspective and narrative distance with the express intention of undermining the rigid certainties of the mode of realism. The complexity of Hardy's narrative strategies in any event invites reading approaches of a Barthian 'writerly' kind, for, as Jakob Lothe perceives in his essay "Variants on genre", "there are intriguing elements of oral narratives in Hardy – legends, ritual, fairy-tale, even parable", and, moreover, that Hardy "exploits other art-forms – painting, sculpture, architecture, music – in his creative work as a novelist" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 128). In line with the view that Hardy's narrative method implicitly questions the tenets of realism, however, Suzanne Keen observes that Hardy's characters are repeatedly shown to misunderstand and misinterpret each other, and although "self-deceived as often as they are deceiving, [they] nonetheless trust in their own rationality" (*Hardy's Brains* 2014, 66). Keen thus regards miscommunication as a plot device for Hardy to exhibit the power of social control: "the judgement of the tribe may be unjust, peremptory, inflected by prejudice, or out-and-out misinformed, […] the tribe retain its power to judge and persuade" (70). So much so that in this manner, as argued in this project, the idea of the Cartesian autonomous subject is implicitly challenged.

In *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), therefore, William Dewy is erroneously interpreted by his community as having no character at all, whereas he is described by the narrative voice as being "humorous, kindly, melancholy

and religious" (43). Apparently, Dewy's social environment does not allow his character to surface, as the frame of reference of those around him prevents them from seeing him otherwise. In a more general way, the narrative suggests the subtle, oppressive workings of the reigning social order on the individual, who is more often than not blind to its reductive or distorting force. Summarily, such a reading also encourages an understanding in terms of Kristeva and Lacan's theories of the condition of self-alienation within the Symbolic order. Quotations in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) reveal his marked interest in this area of thought:

> Doubtless the making of divisions & subdivisions is extremely useful, or rather it is absolutely necessary. Doubtless too in reducing the facts to something like order, they must be partially distorted. So long as the distorted form is not mistaken for the actual form, no harm results. But it is needful for us to remember, that while our successively subordinate groups have certain correspondence with realities, they inevitably give to the realities a regularity which does not exist. (Vol. 1, 91)

In the same novel, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), Mrs. Day is likewise portrayed in a manner that encourages thoughts on the issue of objectivity in representation. In Mr. Day's opinion, Mrs. Day, who is his second wife, is "queer, – very queer, at times!" (114, 116-7). Apparently, however, Mr. Day's declared view stems more from his pre-conception of "second-hand wives" (114, 116), which evidently biases him to become extremely harsh in his judgement. Knowing nothing of his wife's world, nor aware of the gossip that can arise around matters of a woman's housekeeping, Mr. Day cannot understand his second wife's extreme concern about giving Dick a good first impression of their home. In other words, this concern of Mrs. Day's can hardly justify her husband's labeling her "strange" (117-8). Accordingly, after she has re-set the tea table, negligently set by Fancy, who has not even used their best things for the guest, Mrs. Day "took her seat at the head of the table, and during the latter or tea division of the meal presided with much composure. It may cause some surprise to learn that, now her vagary was over, she showed herself to be an excellent person with much common sense, and even a religious seriousness of tone on matters pertaining to her affliction" (118). Clearly Mrs. Day suffers from being misjudged by her husband as he treats her poorly, distancing himself from her without even trying to understand the motives behind what he views as strange behavior. It can be inferred, therefore, that Mr. Day is not ready to see anything in his wife which falls outside his deep-rooted opinion of her, or his frame of reference. Viewed in a broader perspective, the situation can be seen to reflect

the workings of the Symbolic order, with its marginalization, its abjection, of anything which threatens to disrupt its structure.

Similarly, a passage suggestive of the idea of language as governed by the law of the Name of the Father and the process of abjection can be found in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), where Knight is described as imposing his will on Elfride in the carriage on their return from an outing with the Parson. Closing in on Elfride beside him, Knight teasingly whispers to her, "I hope you allow me my place ungrudgingly" (157). Though evidently referring to his place in society as her superior, implicitly, that is, Knight jokingly reminds Elfride that she must accept the law of the Name of the Father on which society is based. Hence, exhibiting the symbolic power of the phallus, Knight comes through as an embodiment of phallic prohibition of the truly feminine in his implicit request that she yield to him. Significantly in this context, therefore, Elfride is described as answering Knight by "accenting the words that he might recognize them as his own returned" (157), with the narrative voice thus indicating the connection of language with the law of the Name of the Father. That is, Elfride's answer to Knight is suggestive of her insight into this connection of language with the power structure of the social order. Elfride hence communicates her subservience to Knight by stressing the words in her answer so that he will recognize them "as his own returned". In this way the narrative indicates Elfride's intuition that, as a woman, she does not fully belong to the realm of language; in other words, she is implicitly revealed as intuiting language as being of the paternal realm and as obeying the law of the Name of the Father.

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), however, the connection of language with the symbolic power of the phallus as the basis of the social order is more evidently conveyed as integral to the plot. For, more often than not, Tess is shown to experience the oppressive force of language as a cultural, social communication system. On Tess's first contact with Angel, for instance, he stands out to her "as an intelligence rather than as a man" (181), with whom, interestingly, she compares herself, though he awakens the disturbing awareness in her of her female condition in the paternal social order (182). This notwithstanding, Angel inspires Tess to emulate him, stimulating aspirations in her to learn, through him, "what books will not teach her" (182). In fact, with time Tess's emulation evolves into idolatry, so that when she prays to God, it is as if it were to Angel (181). In effect Tess truly and fully identifies with Angel to such a degree that she practically becomes his double, "her admiration of him having led her to pick up his vocabulary, his accent, and fragments of his knowledge to a surprising degree" (238). Angel's strong influence on Tess is thus made a point of (207, 350, 408), with the force of his attraction portrayed as a calling in her for his "tutelary guid-

ance" (246). So strong is the imprint of Angel on Tess's character that when she encounters the newly converted Alec as a preacher on the road, after Angel has left for Brazil, Alec notices the mark of Angel in Tess. Expressing his disappointment, Alec blames her for having her "mind enslaved to [Angel's]" (400), claiming he had previously respected her for being unlike other women in having a will of her own (408). Outraged by Alec's "scheme of religion" (388), Tess, however, confronts him with Angel's alternative, which she esteems more highly, though she does so without mentioning his name. So persuasive is Tess, when almost transformed into Angel, using his words to argue for his philosophy of life, that Angel's words through Tess affect Alec so strongly that he abandons his newly won faith (408) in order to win Tess back from Angel.

In contrast, Tess later lacks verbal dexterity, when more herself, in a situation that calls for her to express her emotions in resisting Alec's seductive attacks. Lacking the words to express her innermost feelings, Tess then becomes a mere "vessel of emotions" (410), emotions which she is only able to get across with the violent gesture of a blow with her glove (411). As Margaret Higonnet reflects in her "Introduction" (1998) to the novel: "The question of a woman telling her own story […] lies at the core of Tess's own narrative" (xxxviii); nevertheless, she writes, it is a story "that is socially inaccessible" (xxxviii). Accordingly, pointing to what can be perceived as revealing an insight into the problematic issue of woman in relation to language within the paternal realm of a patriarchal society with her comment, Higonnet observes that "[Tess] seems to exceed the boundaries of the language that describes her" (xxii).

As a woman educated above her social class, therefore, intrinsically rebellious and tainted by scandal, Tess's condition of non-belonging manifestly pushes her to seek identificatory anchorage in Angel, whose role undeniably resonates with her inner sense of self. Tess's sense of lack of Being, her feeling of non-belonging as an Other within the Symbolic order, thus prompts her to identify with Angel to the extent of almost losing her bearings. In the absence of an identificatory female role within the social order consistent with her inner self, therefore, Tess's identificatory drive hooks onto the role offered by Angel, which she is driven to emulate as it appeals to her inner being. As a compensatory mechanism, Tess thus idealizes her identificatory subject of desire, sublimated, as we have observed, to take the form of a divinity. Nevertheless, while seeking refuge from her role as a victim of the process of abjection, in a sense she merely contributes to its process by thus 'abjecting' her own identity to the service of Angel's.

Indeed, the notion of the inadequacy of words to contain the shifting flow of inner experience within their limited, static frames is often apparent in

Hardy's novels.[46] As previously argued, this can be understood as a trace of Hardy's transference into his narrative of his resistance to the claims of rationalism central to the mode of realism. In fact, Nemesvari reminds us of this resistance in his presentation of Hardy's aesthetic as an "aesthetic of protest" in *Thomas Hardy, Sensationalism, and the Melodramatic Mode* (2011, 9); as Nemesvari explains, with Hardy's view that "the greater artist" must aim beyond "the mild walks of everyday life", he "demonstrates his belief that reality is broader than the strictures of realism might wish to recognize" (11). Accordingly, in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Stephen is shown to fail in his attempt to convey the full extent of his feelings to Elfride, making her scold him for giving such a "flat picture" (47) of her. Additionally, as will be exemplified and more fully explained further on, the narrative here exhibits a covert self-reflective instance of its own status as text, revealing, through its inter-text, ideas on the limits of language and by extension, therefore, on the difficulties involved in creative writing. Thus conveyed, the idea of the inability to fully represent the real, or the inner sense of self, calls forth the Lacanian view of language as Other, as only a "chain of metaphors" (*Encore* 1999, 127), which, signifying a lack, represents a "reduction of the human species" (116, 119). According to Lacan, as we have seen, the symbolic therefore "encloses but a hole"(127); yet it is a bearer of ex-sistence (119) in that it is a carrier of prohibited desire for the ineffable truth of the pre-symbolic self of the Real, of the body, which it does not cover completely. As previously observed, Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) give proof of his interest in the issue of self-alienation in language:

> To make a true portrait you must turn the successive into the simultaneous, the plurality into unity, & penetrate through the changing phenomena to the permanent substance. Now I am half a score of different men, according to time & place, surroundings & opportunity. (Vol. 1, 182)

Thus, Hardy's text conveys an insight into the formative process of the Symbolic order, giving rise to a sense of identity and social belonging, as explicated by the present-day psychanalytic theories of Kristeva and Lacan. As argued in this project, however, Hardy's insights into the ideas of such an identificatory process evidently derive from the socio-psychological theories of his reading, expounding the process in the manner in which it was understood in his time.

[46] Among the many critics observing this are Margaret Huntington, Margaret Elvy, Suzanne Keen and Linda Shires, all referred to in this project.

Hence, a questioning of a static view of a unified identity held by rationalism is further exemplified at the beginning of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), where Elfride's father is shown to worry about his daughter's reading of novels, revealing his fear of their potential influence on her sense of self: "You get all kinds of stuff into your head from reading so many of those novels" (3). Another example is in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), when Tess, lamenting her lot following her experience with Alec in 'the Chase', defends herself against her mother's blame: "Ladies know what to fend hands against, because they read novels that tell them of these tricks; but I never had a chance o' learning in that way, and you did not help me!" (131). As we have previously noted, Hardy's *Personal Writings* (Orel 1966) reveal his in-depth study of theories of human psychology. Questioning the very idea of the individual as a self-sufficient, self-enclosed, autonomous being with freedom of choice, he exposes our dependence on our surroundings and the social structure to which we belong, observing: "Even imagination is the slave of stolid circumstance, and the unending flow of inventiveness which finds expression in the literature of fiction is no exception to the general law. It is conditioned by its surroundings like a river-stream" (Orel 1966, 125).

2. Unconscious inflections

That there are disruptive forces at work within us, affecting the order of our written or spoken language, making meaning at least double, is also effectively conveyed in Hardy's fiction, especially in his three earliest novels. Such disruptive forces in language are referred to by Lacan as the unconscious of the articulated: "The unconscious evinces knowledge that for the most part escapes the speaking being" (*Encore* 1999, 139). Especially in Hardy's early novels, therefore, there are passages whereby the unconsciousness of the text is revealed as an unintentional other discourse, signifying beyond the phallic structure of the Other (Fink 1997, 7). Such passages, exhibiting how semiotic eruptions in language impact on meaning, can also be understood as self-reflective; they can be understood as illustrating the traces left in the narrative of Hardy's poetic imagination, disrupting the posited meaning with what is referred to by Kristeva as signifiance.

For instance, in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), there is Cytherea's letter of rejection to Edward, written when she is under the influence of Manston (116). The letter, that is, imparts the notion of disruptive forces at work during the process of writing, capable of surpassing the conscious control of the writer. The narrative explains that the message of this letter "was all unconsciously said in words which betrayed a lingering tenderness of love at every unguarded turn" (115). Thus, Edward is shown to interpret the message by its more forceful communicative power, which he refers to as its

"tone" (165), allowing him to read the letter as an expression of Cytherea's love for him.

In a broader perspective, and in the light of Kristeva's theory, the episode of the letter metaphorically exhibits the workings of the Symbolic order as obeying the law of the Name of the Father. In their joint effort to trap Cytherea into a marriage against her will, that is, Manston and Miss Aldclyffe appear as iconic projections of the phallic Symbolic order (170-91). Thus, the situation in which Cytherea finds herself when writing her letter to Edward under their influence illustrates her integration into the phallic structure, forced as she is to express herself in accordance with its frame of reference, forced as she is to couch the opposite of what she truly desires in words, in accordance with the Law of the Father. In this manner, the drama of the letter illustrates the workings of the disruptive semiotic, thrusting, as a counter-current, against the prohibition of the phallic Symbolic order, disrupting its posited meaning, and thereby revealing the signifiance of the abject which communicates the truth.

Significantly, Miss Aldclyffe first 'pooh poohs' Edward's claim that the tone of the letter cannot be disregarded when interpreting it, for what he thereby alludes to exceeds the frame of reference of the phallic function in which Miss Aldclyffe here appears an iconic projection, seeing, as she does, the Word as One Meaning and the Truth (165). Even when forced to acknowledge the evident ambiguity of the letter, Miss Aldclyffe's reaction mirrors the workings of the phallic function, as she harnesses the disruptive effect of the tone on the message to serve her own ends. Thus, she explains to Edward: "Don't you know yet that in thus putting aside a man, a woman's pity for the pain she inflicts gives her a kindness of tone which is often mistaken for suppressed love?" (165). The reader, however, is given the insight that Edward's inference is closer to the truth (117).

Indeed, as Keen specifies in her study *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014), faulty assumptions, misinterpretations and miscommunication are quintessential features of Hardy's fiction. However, Keen seeks to demonstrate that these form part of Hardy's narrative technique to present his view of affective human psychology, with special concern for the delusional and self-deceived, for those who "literally cannot see straight because of the failings of their perception" (76). Citing the episode of Batsheba's letter to Boldwood in *Far from the Madding Crowd* as an example, Keen is here mainly concerned with how Boldwood as a reader transforms the content of the letter, so that "Not Batsheba but a projection of Boldwood's mind emerges from the writing" (75). Boldwood's erotic projections are thus revealed, through "the matrix of [the narrator's] thought report as insubstantial fantasies" (75). Keen is accordingly largely reader oriented when exemplifying the distinc-

tive occurrence of letter-writing and the reading of letters in Hardy's fiction. In a manner, her analysis therefore also suggests that these passages in Hardy's text can be understood as self-reflective, conveying the idea of a writerly reader. As Margaret Higonnet observes in her "Introduction" (1998) to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), "Tongue in cheek, Hardy acknowledged in his Preface to the Fifth Edition the contribution to the creative process made by readers' 'own imaginative intuition' (Appendix I)" (xxxviii). In contrast, my emphasis in this project on the self-reflective passages in Hardy's fiction exposes how the process of writing reveals itself through the narrative. In *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), for instance, the whole episode on Elfride's novelette is clearly self-reflective, suggesting even a synecdochic reflection of Hardy's own attempts at writing. In *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), Dick's letter to Fancy, written in an irritated state of mind, presents another poignant example of a self-reflective, multi-layered passage of a 'mise-en abyme', exposing the workings of the narrative itself through the writing of one of the characters. Desirous of imparting his feelings for Fancy while demanding a prompt response in which she clearly reveals her love for him, Dick's letter turns out to be a very ambiguous piece of writing indeed, with manifold possibilities of interpretation:

> The dignity of the writer's mind was so powerfully apparent in every line of this effusion that it obscured the logical sequence of facts and intentions to an appreciable degree; and it was not at all clear to the reader whether he there and then left off loving Miss Fancy Day; whether he had never loved her seriously and never meant to; whether he had been dying up to the present moment and now intended to get well again; or whether he had hitherto been in good health and intended to die for her forthwith. (127)

Without doubt imbued with the satiric spirit, and intended to provoke laughter, the passage nevertheless evokes the more serious implications of Hardy's anti-realism in that it can be understood as a flash of the self-reflective narrative mode. Seen in such a light, it is suggestive of how the demands of an excessively normative language, such as those of censorship, for instance, can affect a writer's text. In other words, the narrative exhibits a dynamic view of language as a living form, suggestive of it as formed through a process of contending forces; it is revelatory of how disproportionate prohibition gives rise to a countercurrent of the return of the repressed, thus affecting language as a disruptive force that undermines its static phallic structure of meaning. In consideration of this, therefore, the narrative of the letter can be understood to display what Kristeva refers to as the disruptive semiotic, which, according to her theory, especially affects language within

the phallic Symbolic order in excessively authoritarian societies, as we have previously explained.

In the light of Lacan's theory of language, the above-mentioned episode of the letter in Hardy's novel *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) is suggestive of how the unconscious takes shape in language. In any case, the depiction of the letter certainly evokes the view Hardy must have shared with Victorian psychologists and novelists alike, of the complexity of human psychology, whose unconscious forces were capable of affecting rational behavior to the extent that, as Vanessa Ryan remarks, cited by Keen in her study of Hardy's view of human psychology in *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014): "much of our inner life remains obscure, even opaque, to our conscious minds" (54). As we have seen, therefore, and as we will further exemplify, attention is often drawn to matters of communication in Hardy's fiction, highlighting, as Suzanne Keen also observes, situations of misinterpretation, misunderstanding and, not least, ambiguity of meaning, resulting from the unconscious defense mechanisms of those involved.

PART II: ARTISTIC NATURES

As previously mentioned, although Hardy's novels are often criticized for their unsatisfactory character portrayals and inconclusive endings, they still captivate readers even in our day. Hence it seems that Hardy's fiction appeals to readers on a deeper level than that of its plots. In consideration of the view that there is an underlying force of attraction in Hardy's novels, therefore, this part presents an intertextual analysis of Hardy's character depiction, probing his narrative for a deeper sense that has to do with Hardy's pronounced interest in the issues of creativity. As we shall demonstrate, the underlying issues of creativity are strikingly prevalent in Hardy's novels, so much so that the characters can be viewed as propelled by the distinctive narcissism of their creative bent. It will thus be argued that the anticlimactic loving relationships typical of Hardy's novels are suggestive of the characters' yearning as artists for an impossible ideal. Exploring the text in the light of such a view of the characters, therefore, also allows us to notice further marks of their artistic bent in the narrative, such as a sixth sense and a propensity for visionary states; at times we will see how the a character's artistic personality becomes apparent in the form of iconic projection.

1. Iconic Ruptures

In connection with the discussion on how allusions to issues of creativity reveal themselves in Hardy's fiction, we have demonstrated that Edward is explicitly linked to creativity when he is first introduced in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) as a poet. On the other hand, although, as we shall see, Cytherea's soul is evidently that of an artist, this can only be implicitly deduced. Daughter of the architect Ambrose Graye, who, like Edward's father, is something of an artist (34, 61, 64), she is introduced as belonging to the "living throbbing", as a being of "ether" or "soul" rather than "clay". When first described, that is, Cytherea is conveyed as characterized by motion, with her whole body indicating movement, with her outer reflecting her inner, as if she were set in sway by her nature; she is essentially ethereal, like a Botticelli painting, revealing, as Millgate observes, "the soul outside the body, permeating the spectator with its emotion" (Millgate *Life* 1984, 226). In *Jude the Obscure* (1896) this view of a character trait is taken to an extreme, with the ethereal Sue Brideshead, who is explicitly referred to as an artist (134), while depicted as "all nervous motion" (137). Meanwhile, in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), Cytherea is described thus: "Indeed, motion was her speciality whether shown on its most extended scale of bodily expression, as in the uplifting of her eyelids, the bending of her fingers, the pouting of her lip. The carriage of her head – motion within motion – a glide

upon a glide – was as delicate as that of a magnetic needle. And this flexibility and elasticity had never been taught her by rule, nor even acquired by observation" (5). In a later passage, the inner intensity imbuing Cytherea's whole being is explicitly linked with the feminine: "There is an attitude – approximately called pensive – in which the soul of the human being, and especially of a woman, dominates outwardly and expresses its presence so strongly, that the intangible essence seems more apparent than the body itself" (219).

We have also previously argued for the evident link to creativity in the narrative of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), where Knight appears an example of the prohibitive paternal, while Elfride's inclination for writing associates her with creativity. Interestingly, therefore, Elfride is characteristically depicted as looking "intensely living" and "full of movement" (19): "And Elfride was nowhere in particular, yet everywhere, sometimes in front, sometimes at the sides, hovering about the procession like a butterfly; not definitely engaged in travelling, yet sometimes chiming in at points with the general progress" (18). Elfride is even explicitly associated with the very Shelleyan symbol of the creative power, the wind, as she "went away into the wind, being caught by a gust" (20).

In *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), however, it is mainly the name of the character Fancy which appears an iconic sign, pointing to an underlying theme of creativity in what appears to be a mere pastoral romance. We know that Hardy was well read in the works of Charles Fourier and J. S. Mill, taking special notice of their ideas on the condition of women in a patriarchal society.[47] Mill's line of reasoning when addressing this issue, by bringing in the problem of identity and language, appears to have particularly interested Hardy, as the quotations in his *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) attest. It seems that Hardy was at least conscious of and perhaps even endorsed the view of the truly feminine as essentially indefinable in a language devised by men. In any case, such an awareness shines through in many of his character depictions, such as that of Cytherea above, or of Sue Brideshead, whose inner selves are shown to exceed the outer frame of social identity so much that it is revealed in their bearing, spilling over as an "intangible essence", "more apparent than the body itself". This is also the case with

[47] Lennart Björk, *Psychological Vision and Social Criticism in the Novels of Thomas Hardy.* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1987) 126. See also *The Literary Notebooks II.* Ed. Lennart Björk (London and Basinstoke: Macmillan,1985) entry 1686 (12), entry 2081 (106), entry 1919 (507). *Notebooks III* (London Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985) entry 2516 (329). Thomas Hardy's interest in the ideas of J. S. Mill is noted in *New Woman in Fiction and in Fact.* Eds. Angelique Richardson, Chris Willis (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001) 191. Hardy is claimed to have known Mill's *On Liberty* practically by heart. The inscrutable feminine was already claimed by Kant in his *Anthropologie*, as we have seen mentioned by J. Derrida in *Glas I* (Paris: Denoel/Gronthier, 1982) 176-84.

Tess, whose 'surplus' so noticeably affects her surroundings at the dairy farm that it makes Angel reflect: "Whose was this mighty personality making the house come alive?" (*Tess* 1891, 214). Tess is also experienced by Angel as a "visionary essence of woman" (187), a "real incarnation", and is further described in such terms as "the brimfulness of her nature" (231). As Margaret Higonnet reflects on Tess in her "Introduction" (1998) to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), "she seems to exceed the language that describes her" (xxii), so much so that, as Higonnet further discerns, "Mocking, teasing or benighted, the men in her life insistently rebaptize her with names such as 'Coz', 'my pretty' (like the names of two cows), 'Aremisora', 'maidy'" (xxiii). Tess's tendency to lose herself in trance-like states (*Tess* 1891, 208) is also made much of, while she is even likened to a poet by Angel as, in his view, she "lives what paper poets only write" (225). In this manner, the social structure under the Law the Father is revealed as subordinating that which threatens to disrupt its order, for these characters, with their inexpressible aura of an otherworldly 'surplus' within them, like the movement of an excess of soul or energy, can be interpreted as exhibiting the workings of abjection within the Symbolic order; they can be seen as exposing the phallic function with its abjection of that which exceeds it. In other words, the condition of those whose inner self cannot be contained within the gender identity of the Symbolic order is thus implicitly conveyed as comparable to that of the poet or the artist, living in excess of the phallic function, in resistance to the prohibition of maternal jouissance of the social order with its claims of truth.[48]

In a Lacanian understanding of the delineation of characters such as Cytherea, Sue or Tess, they can be seen as metaphors for the feminine structure, in rejection of the phallic, of the Other of language; not wholly in the phallic Symbolic structure, therefore, these characters are evidently not-whole within it; as metaphors for the feminine structure they thus display there being "something more", a "surplus" in them, an "excess" beyond the "straitjacket" of the paternal function of language as Other.49 Accordingly,

[48] Hardy's attitude to science was ambiguous as he gravitated to the view of Poetry as a key to understanding the mysteries of life of the Romantics. J.R Watson, *English Poetry of the Romantic Period 1789-1830* (London: Longman, 1989) 225-258. Walter Pater *Appreciations with an Essay on Style* (London: Macmillan, 1915). Harold Orel, *Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings Prefaces, Literary Opinions, Reminiscences* (Lawrence: Kansas UP, 1966) 56-7. The *Literary Notebooks II* (1985) entry 2306 (182). Matthew Arnold's view states: "More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us. Without poetry, our science will appear incomplete; and most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry".
[49] Jacques Lacan *Encore. The Seminar of Jacques Lacan.* Trans. and Notes Bruce Fink. Ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (London & NY: Norton & Co, 1999) 46-74, 96. On Lacan's view of the 'feminine structure', see Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject. Between Language and Jouissance* (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997) 112.

when confronted with both Jude's and Mr Philottson's condescending attitude to her experience of the model of Jerusalem, Sue insists: "I only meant – I don't know what I meant – except that it was what you don't understand!" (*Jude* 1896, 156).

Viewed in the light of Kristeva's theory, the descriptions of the characters in terms of 'motility', 'intangible essence', or 'inexpressible' excess assimilate them with the idea of the potentially creative as they evidence the pulsation of the pre-Oedipal drives in and through the unified self of symbolic identity, which is that of the phallic Symbolic order (*Revolution* 1984, 159, 170). In this regard, these characters appear as epitomes of the artistic disposition in the narrative of mother identification, indicating the idea, that is, of an artistic disposition. It is thus the disruptive creative power within them which suffuses their whole being; it is the maternal semiotic Chora which moves the artist that these characters expose. As Kristeva maintains: "Genetic biological rejection suffuses the organic body with motility and imprints on it a "gesturality" that social needs and constraints will then structure" (170). However, what these characters iconize in the narrative is the return of this motility in the already constituted unified self, which characterizes an artistic disposition. As Kristeva describes the process of creative activity: "Feelings are nothing, nor are ideas, everything lies in motility" (170).

A further example of the implications of creativity revealed through Hardy's character portrayal is Jude Fawley in *Jude the Obscure* (1896), whose vague academic ambitions and dreams of Christminster have associations with an artist's yearning for some diffuse paradisal state, and who, interestingly enough, at one point is explicitly likened to the eccentric, artistically inclined Sue Brideshead. Speaking of Sue's strange ways as a little child to Jude, his aunt ends up comparing her to him as she notices that they seemed to share the same "trick […] of seeming to see things in the air" (162). Explicit in *Jude the Obscure* (1896), therefore, is the idea of visionary states as characteristic of the creatively inclined.

2. Impossible relationships

In agreement with the view of yearning for the unattainable as a quintessential part of the creatively inclined, Edward, who we have seen explicitly referred to as a poet in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), is exacting in establishing a relationship with the opposite sex. Thus, he reveals his fastidiousness when speaking to Owen before meeting Cytherea: "she must be girlish and artless: yet he would be to do with a dash of womanly subtlety, 'tis so piquant. Yes, he said, that must be in her; she must have womanly cleverness." Furthermore, Owen quotes Edward as having said: "And yet I would like her to blush if only a cock-sparrow were to look at her hard […] which

brings me back to the girl again: and so I flit backwards and forwards." Summing it up, Owen continues, "[…] a child among pleasures and a woman among pains was the rough outline of his requirements" (16). Further on in the narrative, Edward's high expectations of the woman of his choice are clarified in terms of the specificity of his character; it is his "impressionable heart" which renders it difficult for him to find a partner in accordance with his desire, for apparently his is a poet's yearning for an unattainable ideal:

> An impressionable heart had for years […] been distracting him, by consciously setting himself to yearn for somebody, wanting, he scarcely knew whom. Echoes of himself, though rarely, he now and then found. Sometimes they were men, sometimes they were women, his cousin Adelaide being one of these; […] But the indefinable helpmate to the remote side of himself still continued invisible. He grew older, and concluded that the ideas, or rather emotions, which possessed him on the subject, were too unreal ever to be found in the flesh of a woman. Wandering away to the heroines of poetical imagination, and he took no further thought on the earthly realisation of his formless desire, in more homely matters satisfying himself with his cousin. (146)

As it seems, Edward's "formless desire" for a relationship that he realises is not to be found in life is suggestive of a desire for a lost blissful experience, whose memory, vaguely etched within him, is haunting him. In the light of Plato's theory of poetic inspiration, Edward suffers from a poet's yearning for the unattainable realm of the Ideal, experienced during moments of poetic inspiration. Apparently thus transposed in the novel is the essentially Platonist romantic idealism, especially as expressed by Shelley, in his aesthetic philosophy of the Poet's yearning for inexpressible Truth and Beauty, perceived in flashes of visionary states, through the imaginative reason. It is well known that, in Romantic literature, the Poet's yearning for the inexpressible Ideal often ended in tragic death.

As we shall see, the theme of longing or desire for the inexpressible in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) is also forcefully conveyed through Cytherea and, although more problematically, through Miss Aldclyffe. Moreover, this distinguishing trait is shown to affect the characters' intimate relationships in a manner suggestive of the idea of Lacanian a-sexual desire for the unspeakable Other jouissance beyond the Symbolic, always "outside any and all systems" (120); as Fink explains in *The Lacanian Subject* (1997), this "can never be recuperated into a 'phallic economy'" (122).

Again, when considered in the perspective of Kristeva's theory, Edward's resistance to adapting to the socially acceptable idea of love of his time is a sign of strong, irrepressible, disruptive forces of desire that move him,

against the boundaries of the socio-symbolic order, in his desire for the experience of an idealized reminiscence of inexpressible maternal jouissance. Likewise, with reference to Kristeva's theory of the semiotic, and in view of Edward's "formless desire" for the "indefinable", he can be seen to embody the characteristics of an artistic disposition. His diffuse yearning for the unattainable thus appears to be an indication of his not being fully integrated into the phallic Symbolic order (Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 213).

As we have seen, Edward is a poet, and therefore has difficulties finding emotional fulfilment in conventional love, apparently longing for what he cannot express in words. Hence, in accordance with both Platonist romantic idealism and with the perspectives of Kristeva and Lacan's theories, Edward's desire for an indefinable, impossible ideal relationship reflects the characteristics of his creative disposition, yearning for the reminiscence of a lost, blissful experience. As Penelope Vigar observes in *The Novels of Thomas Hardy, Illusion and Reality* (1974), in Hardy's fiction "The reactions of the human beings to their environment and to each other merge imperceptibly into implied theories of truth and art and the tension between the real and the ideal" (127-8). As here argued, however, there is a distinctive ambiguity in Hardy's narrative; "this heterogeneity", as Margaret Higonnet describes it in her "Introduction" to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1998, xxii), problematizes the prospect of any such clear-cut interpretation of Hardy's fiction as a closed text. With Shelley being Hardy's favourite poet, however, as previously argued in agreement with Norman Page and Suzanne Keen's studies of Hardy's narrative, Shelley's ideas of Romanticism have evidently left a mark on Hardy, detectable in the form of a trace in his novels (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999; 51, Keen 2014, 108). As mentioned in the above, this sub-text of miscellaneous traces of influence of the Romantics' Neoplatonic aesthetic in Hardy's fiction can thus be transposed into the present-day psychoanalytic discourses of Kristeva and Lacan. Nevertheless, as Margaret Higonnet remarks in her "Introduction" (1998), Hardy's characterization is "multi-layered" and "ambiguous" (vxii), and, as Keen specifies in *Hardy's Brains* (2014), "Hardy's was an art of undermining certainties, or qualifying conclusions", revealing a preference perceptible in his text for, as Keen further remarks in her study, "a suspension of resolution" (108-9). Accordingly, Hardy's fiction is described by Nemesvari as "hybrid texts" of a "mix" of varied influences that are difficult to determine (*Sensationalism* 2011, 6), and, as previously considered, Hardy's resistance to categorization and the expression of certainties of unequivocal meaning, his vaguely formulated views of affective psychology, his view of growth, change and process as guiding principles in life (Higonnet, 1998, xxiii, Keen 2014, 71-2, 108-9) clearly contribute to the affinities discernible in his texts with the psychoan-

alytic semiotic theories of both Kristeva and Lacan, which makes possible an understanding of his novels in their terms.

In line with a typical Hardy protagonist like Edward in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), therefore, Elfride and Stephen in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1872) are over-fastidious when it comes to romantic relationships, revealing a seemingly shared trait which pushes them to refuse what life offers; it appears they are at the mercy of a forceful desire for an ineffable, unconditional, harmonious state of boundless, eternal bliss. Of relevance, when viewed in the perspective of Kristeva's theory, is the historical context of the novel, which is set in a transitional epoch of rapid social changes as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, effecting a shift of power from the landed gentry to the industrialists. Inevitably engendering significant paradigm shifts in society, such periods of radical social change often give rise to a general ideological disorientation in society which proves particularly harmful to the individual, especially to individuals prone to experiencing the paradigm shift as an infringement of the sense of self. In Kristeva's terms this is true of a mother-identifying subjectivity, since such a person is already lacking in internal stability. In accordance with the view here argued, of Elfride and Stephen's potentially creative personalities as subjectivities not fully integrated in the social order, they also exhibit the characteristic responsiveness of the creatively inclined to the social instability of their epoch.[50]

Elfride is thus unable to understand her father's extreme reaction to Stephen's full disclosure of his modest origins, in addition to which his pretence at being of blue blood has only made matters worse: "I object as much, if not more, to his underhand concealment of this, than I do to the fact itself" (63). For in her state as not fully integrated in the social order, Elfride is apparently impervious to its rule of the Law of the Father, and therefore incapable of understanding what truly matters within it. By the same token, Elfride is apparently at a loss when confronting her father on the issue of Stephen being a mere "villager's son" (63), for in her attempt to appeal to his understanding, she reveals the discrepancy between their points of view by saying: "But, he is the same man, papa, the same in every particular; and how can he be less fit for me than he was before?" (64).

Similarly seen, a force of indefinable desire pushes Stephen to aspire beyond the prospects of a life of merely following in the footsteps of his father. There are further instances in the narrative exhibiting his state of ex-sistence, however. Such an instance is the portrayal of Stephen's physical appearance as bearing a resemblance to the poet Shelley, in an intrusively

[50] Tina Chanter and Ewa Plonowska Zarek, "Introduction," *Revolt, Affect, Collectivity. The Unstable Boundaries of Kristeva's Polis* (New York: State University of New York, 2005) 1-8.

presented close-up portrait which, significantly, is usually the prerogative of Hardy's female characters. In this manner, the narrative implicitly imparts the idea of Stephen's feminine streak, with special emphasis on its link to creativity.

In turn, Elfride's transgressive desire, resulting from her condition of ex-sistence, apparently blinds her to the division between the imaginary and the Symbolic within the phallic structure under the Law of the Father. Suffering from extreme jealousy, as if sexual difference were irrelevant in the matter, Elfride hence confronts Stephen about his feelings for her, forcing him to compare them with his idealizing admiration for his tutor, Knight, in order to make him reveal his feelings for her (48-50). Stephen is not easily coaxed into declaring his love for her in this way, however, and when he finally does so it is not very convincing. Elfride's response, when jokingly scolding him for his failed attempt, is yet another telling sign of the couple's suffering an impossible love, in that it reveals Stephen's desire as being impossible to be put into words. As Elfride's dissatisfaction with Stephen's attempt shows, therefore, "'I don't care for your love, if it made a mere flat picture of me in that way, and not being sure, and such cold reasoning; but what you felt I was, you know, Stephen' (at this a stealthy laugh and frisky look into his face), 'when you said to yourself, "I'll certainly love that young lady." (47).

As argued above, Elfride and Sephen appear to be living an existential threshold condition of the creatively inclined, defined by Lacan as ex-sistence. At a meta-narrative level their state of ex-sistence thus shines through in the portrayal of their uncertainty about their gender roles, which appears to strengthen their magnetic pull towards each other. If Elfride is drawn to Stephen for his pretty face, as she tells her father: "His face is – well – *pretty*, just like mine" (8), for his "divinely cut lips" (30) and his being "so docile and gentle" (47), then Stephen admires Elfride for her cleverness: "I think Miss Swancourt very clever" (20), he observes, on hearing from her father that she often writes his sermons for him, "and a very good job she makes of them!" (20). Hence, though certainly admiring Elfride's feminine beauty, Stephen seems the more attracted to her for her "boyishness" (15) and for her outshining him in talents traditionally associated with manliness, like chess-playing and horse-riding (36, 37, 41).

Jokingly alluding to this excess, at whose mercy they feel to be in their desire, Elfride at one point plays at being 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' with Stephen. At a meta-narrative level, this game of Elfride's, where she playfully takes on the role of a forceful, capricious lady, suggests the signifiance of

her exhibiting the power of the pre-symbolic phallic Mother[51]; thus, Elfride is shown to impersonate the couple's desire for each other as associated with the maternal space of ambiguity and source of abjection. The narrative thus exhibits a flash of authorial maternal jouissance finding its catharsis in the act of creative sublimation in writing. Hence, it conveys the couple's desire as a yearning for a vaguely remembered, long lost state of plenitude, referred to in philosophical terms as that of Primordial Man, and recognized in present-day psychoanalytical terms as the pre-symbolic maternal space.

Still, attempting to clarify the strong, immediate and rather erratic attraction which arises between the couple Stephen and Elfride in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) calls for yet another example of how their distinct form of desire implicitly reveals itself in the narrative. When Elfride is alone at home on the evening after the couple's outing, she is dreaming about Stephen, whose mysterious air of hiding some deep private secret further enflames her desire. Then suddenly Stephen is seen to appear, like an apparition from the dark of the garden, "just outside the porch, silvered about the head and shoulders with touches of moonlight that had begun to creep through the trees" (54).

Interestingly, the sudden apparition of Stephen is described from the viewpoint of Elfride, conveying the idea of the figure of Stephen appearing before Elfride as if in a visionary state. For the passage abounds in symbols pertaining to notions of creativity. We have previously mentioned Stephen's resemblance to a portrait of P B Shelley, and his mysterious air of otherness, revealed through his awkward chess playing and his not being able to ride a horse. In the passage above, he is additionally portrayed as appearing like an apparition from the dark, imbued with touches of moonlight, which is the very emblem of creativity. Paradoxically, as we have seen above, Elfride is drawn the more to Stephen because of a mysterious air about him, inspiring her wild imaginings of his being involved in some secret love affair (30-31, 33, 53). While, at a meta-narrative level, Elfride's desire is shown to be enhanced by Stephen's "private secret", suggesting the sense of the couple's bonding through an identificatory experience of phallic abjection, the signifiance of Stephen's being "silvered about the head and shoulders with touches of moonlight" in the passage commented above, also implies a flash of authorial jouissance that transfuses Hardy's writing, opening the text to its maternal space. In Lacanian terms the reference to "touches of

[51] Marcia Ian, *Remembering the Phallic Mother: Psychoanalysis, Modernism and the Fetish* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1993) 8. The Phallic Mother is the phantasmatic power of the mother, with both feminine and masculine attributes. It is the image of the mother possessing nurturing and birth giving phallus, as observed by Marcia Ian: "The image of the phallic mother purports to embody immanence as mother, as a woman who inseminates and lactates".

silvery moonlight" forms the jouissing substance of the narrative unconscious, indicative of Hardy's creative sublimation in writing, revealing in the narrative the sense of Stephen's belonging to the mother-identifying creative kind.

In a similar manner, the inherent rebelliousness of Elfride and Stephen in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) is implicitly conveyed pictorially through the description of their experience of the inside of the Luxellian mansion. For the mansion is presented as "a long sombre apartment", whose chilly darkness and Luxellian portraits of "cadaverous complexion" are felt by Elfride as "seeming to gaze at and through her", making them "feel somewhat depressed" (28). Here, with its connotations of imprisonment, depression and even death, and, moreover, with Elfride's suffering, the portraits "seeming to gaze at and through her", the narrative translates well into an experience of the law of the Name of the Father as lived through an artist's subjectivity of mother-identification. In this milieu, therefore, Stephen and Elfride experience each other as liberating forces of light and life;[52] in other words, there appears to be a mutual understanding between them, of their desire for the memory of the lost idealized state of the maternal space of jouissance; their mutual understanding of a longing for a lost sense of wholeness, of their desire to fill their inner void.

Arguably, in Kristeva's terms, that is, Stephen and Elfride appear to suffer from their condition of mother identification; or, as expressed in Lacanian terms, the couple can be seen to suffer from their state of ex-sistence, for unknowingly they are prey to disruptive forces that propel them from within to break away from the repressive bounds of the Law of the Father. In desire, that is, for what they cannot understand, victims of a force of which they are barely aware, in yearning for the unattainable, they are driven to surmount all boundaries by the force of their desire for what is in effect but an inexpressible, idealized loss, a memory only, of the maternal space. Accordingly, the couple's love is suggestive of the idea of an impossible love which is metaphorically exhibited in the narrative, conveying a view of love reminiscent of the Lacanian idea of the impossible sexual relationship.

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), however, the specificity of character of Tess and Angel, which pulls them towards each other, is clearly formulated as their hazy idealism; the force of their attraction, that is, seems to be more of a yearning for some ethereal, undefinable mode of existence, free

[52] As previously noted, in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) 19, 51, 54, 67. Elfride is experienced by Stephen as being "so intensely living and full of movement". She is also described as an "illuminated" figure. Stephen's mysterious air makes a strong impression on Elfride when he appears before her in the dark like a figure imbued with moonlight. Interestingly, in like manner, Stephen's father is at one time described as a figure "illuminated" by the moon, appearing in the dark, like an apparition, before Stephen.

from all constraint, rather than love in any ordinary sense (167-188). As Tess at one point observes about the force of attraction between them, they seem to be attracted by each other's "strangeness" (181). As we have seen, Tess's education sets her apart from her immediate environment, making her a bit of a stranger, even before the social alienation she suffers as a consequence of the rape.

Something else seems to make Tess different, however, for there are small hints in the narrative that, even before the effects of her education, Tess set herself apart as rebellious and subject to states of eerie premonition about the tragic outcome of her life. What comes across from the beginning, therefore, is Tess's singularity and her more acute intuitive powers, associated by the Romantics with creativity. As A. Boden reminds us in her study, *The Creative Mind: Myths and Mechanisms* (1990, 14-5), the Romantics regarded the creatively inclined as being nonconformists or eccentric loners, gifted with the special talent of insight or intuition to perceive the inexpressible essence of life (14). With the Romantics providing no understanding of creativity in the form of a scientific account, therefore, in her study Margaret Boden labels their view of it as a "pseudo-mysticism" (16); in other words, as the Romantics considered science as limiting to the imagination, they favored a view of creativity moved by mysterious inspirational forces, by visionary states, by perceptions of the essential truth of reality which cannot be wholly contained in words. Clearly, parallels can here be drawn with the more present-day, near mystical views of creativity propounded by Kristeva and Lacan alike, as we have previously seen in the above.

For, clearly prone to states of inward contemplation characteristic of a poet, Tess is described as taking "mental journey[s] to inwardly behold" things (*Tess* 1891, 65), at times losing herself in a mystical communion with life, with what Lacan determines as the unknowable Real Other[53], as revealed in the following: "Tess fell more deeply into reverie than ever, the occasional heave of the wind became the sigh of some immense sad soul" (70). In other words, Tess's condition of ex-sistence is shown to be not entirely the result of her education. Described as "sadly out of place" (66), Tess's resistance to conforming to social norms and customs, which we have seen is typical of the mother-identifying rebellious, artistic kind, makes her family say, "Tess is queer" (65), when discussing their limited success at making her accept the terms and conditions of marriage. In this, Tess's refusal to believe in her mother's dream of a better future for her is suggestive of the prophetic intuition of an artist, whose misgivings about what such a

[53] Johnston, Adrian, "Jacques Lacan", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/lacan. (retrieved November 29, 2019). That is the Real Other of the maternal space.

life has to offer are caused by diffuse longings for some lost state, which she can neither express nor understand, but which make her ever discontented with life as it is. As we might expect, in a discussion about the stars, where Tess claims most are "splendid and sound" but that there are "a few blighted" (69), therefore, she answers her brother Abraham's question on the condition of the world they are living on by saying that it is "blighted" (70).

Furthermore, on the morning of Tess's departure for her first day of work at the D'Urberville property, the depiction of the stillness of the morning is invested with signifiance, with the words, "save for one prophetic bird who sings with a clear-voiced conviction that he at least knows the correct time of day, the rest preserving silence as if equally convinced that he is mistaken" (89); here, the "one prophetic bird" is evocative of Tess with her misgivings, singing, alone, "with clear-voiced conviction" against those around her; reading the signifiance of the passage as suggestive of Tess's idea, it can implicitly be understood as signifying that Tess's ominous premonition is justified.

As we have seen above with Elfride in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), therefore, Tess, in her state of ex-sistence, is incapable of understanding Angel's intransigence and change of attitude towards her, following her confession of being a "fallen woman". While, in contrast to Elfride, Tess often seems to blame herself, as she evidently sees herself in the perspective of the Law of the Father, in this case, Tess appears as impervious as Elfride to the rule of the Law of the Father. Indeed, this time its social norms and morality clearly mean nothing to Tess when she confronts Angel with her egalitarian claims. Hence Angel's confession of being a "fallen man" (*Tess* 1891, 292) makes no difference to Tess, as she argues that she loves him "in all changes, because you are yourself" (298). Moreover, she goes on to explain, "I thought you loved me – me, my very self" (298).

As we shall see further on, however, as with Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) and Miss Aldclyffe in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), there is an ambiguity in Angel. For, rebellious and something of a dreamer, Angel shares the characteristics of the artistically inclined with Tess, including that of being generally difficult (*Tess* 1891, 258); there was, "something nebulous, preoccupied, vague in his bearing" (169). What is more, Angel is subject to flashes of ecstasy, which give him the sense of being "other worldly" (213), and even make him seem to hear "the voices of inanimate things" (174). Furthermore, as the narrative voice specifies, Angel's love for Tess is of a Shelleyan kind; it is idealizing, ethereal and imaginative (257). As we have seen with Edward in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) and, to some extent, with Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), therefore, Angel is exacting in matters of the heart; in other words, he is evidently prone to pursuing the un-

attainable: "With these [natures like Angel's] natural, corporeal presence is sometimes less appealing than corporeal absence; the later creating an ideal presence […]" (*Tess* 1891, 315). Moreover, as Angel expresses it: "I think of people more kindly when I am away from them." (316). However, there is an ambiguity in Angel which will be argued for in greater detail further on.

3. Pictorial variation of signifiance

"There is, of course, underlying the fantasy followed by the visionary artist the truth that all men are pursuing a shadow, the Unattainable" (Millgate *Life* 1984, 304). Arguably, this view, expressed by Hardy in his biography, is reflected in the inter-text of his novels; it is implicitly exhibited, that is, through their imagery, connoting notions of an artist's longing, sense of lack and unfulfilled desire. Implicitly conveying an artistic experience, the novels, as we shall see, impart the visionary states of insight characteristic of the artistically inclined through iconic signs and iconic projections, which, as in a painting, point to some conceptual meaning beyond that which is represented. Such a literary device, though apparent in most of the novels, is dominant in only a few. Hence, though such visual presentations of notions, like a painting in words, are noteworthy, for instance, in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) or *Jude the Obscure* (1896), they do not occur to the same extent as in *Desperate Remedies* (1871)*, Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) or *The Return of the Native* (1878). As previously observed, however, Hardy's distinctive 'pictorial' style is generally noted by critics, though they may variously appreciate and interpret it. William Watson, as Suzanne Keen points out in *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014), for instance, admired Hardy's 'pictorial' style as poetic: "Hardy's manner of sometimes using external Nature not simply as a background or setting but as a sort of superior spectator and chorus [commenting with] sublime aloofness upon the ludicrous tragedy of the human lot" (Keen 2014, 58). Still, other critics perceive the 'pictorial' as metaphors for inner feelings, seeing it as a narrative device for Hardy to report "conditions of the mind of which the characters are unaware" (64). Various forms of the visual may vary in signifiance, however, encouraging manifold interpretations depending on the context of the study. Hence, notable in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) is a passage where Elfride, in a discussion with Knight on the issue of fame, suddenly ceases to listen, as she loses herself in a "contemplative state", generally considered at the time as a trait revelatory of an artist: "On such occasions she artlessly surveyed the person speaking, and then there was a time for a painter. Her eyes seemed to look at you, and past you, as you were then, into your future; and past your future into your eternity – not reading it, but gazing in an unused, unconscious way – her mind still clinging to its original thought" (127).

Similarly, in the opening scene of *The Return of the Native* (1878), Eustacia Vye is portrayed as a lone figure, surveying Egdon Heath from a hilltop, lost in a state of "impassioned contemplation". Indeed, Eustacia is introduced almost as an apparition, an anonymous dark shape, gazing into the distance of a vast, barren landscape. As the reader will learn, however, such is her habitual presence on Egdon Heath. Thus described as a woman imbued with mystery, Eustacia is referred to as "queen of the solitude", who "some say is a witch" (64, 102). Thus portrayed, as a shadowy figure without a name, the sense conveyed of Eustacia is an all-pervading ominous potentially disruptive presence. As previously mentioned, she was originally conceived as a witch in what is believed to have been the *Ur-novel* of what we now know as *The Return of the Native* (1878).[54] Eustacia thus retains traces of the original conception of her character. Contributing to enhancing the ominous aura which surrounds her, that is, the traces of the witch create an air of mystery about her, while strengthening the impression of her as an outcast, as someone not fully integrated in her surroundings. As Margaret Elvy notices in *Sexing Hardy* (2007), "Eustacia is a 'would-be-poet' […] with hidden powers she does not know how to activate" (99). Moreover, in rebellion against her surroundings (*Return* 1878*,* 119, 120), Eustacia is tormented by desire, yet by an undefinable form of desire for "the abstraction called passionate love more than for any particular lover" (121). As Margaret Elvy expresses it in *Sexing Hardy* (2007), "Eustacia loves love more than any particular lover […] she desires something from men that they cannot provide" (97). In support of her view, Elvy thus cites D.H Lawrence's claim that Eustacia does not know what she wants, "but it is evidently some form of self-realization. She wants to be herself, to attain herself" (98). Interpreted in this context, however, Eustacia is portrayed as a singularity exhibiting the distinctive signs of a creative soul, with her otherworldly gaze and her "instincts towards social non-conformity", as Southerington puts it in *Hardy's Vision of Man* (1971, 122, 123). What is more, Eustacia exhibits the characteristic of falling into trance-like states as if she is experiencing visions. Both feared and slandered because of her mysterious air, her ominous aura associated with repressed dark inner forces, Eustacia's condition as an outcast makes her a perfect metaphor for Kristeva's idea of the abject, signifying, that is, the disruptive, potentially destructive or creative force of the truly feminine repressed. Eustacia's contemplative state, gazing into the distance in yearning for what she cannot say or know, yet seemingly gaining an insight into life, is moreover suggestive of the Lacanian gaze; it evokes the idea of Eustacia sensing the state of self-alienation as pure desire, of

[54] See John Patersen, *The Making of The Return of the Native*. (University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960).

her insight into being constituted by desire for desire; it is revelatory of her insight, that is, into the absent center which constitutes her.[55]

On the other hand, in D*esperate Remedies* (1871), although Cytherea Graye is often posed gazing into the distance, unlike Eustacia, she is presented as a figure of light and innocence, which comes across as an iconic sign of the positive effects of the truly feminine. Associated with visionary states evocative of the insight into the indefinable truth of existence, that is, the signifiance of Cytherea's gazing pose suggests the idea of her as an iconic sign of the truly feminine as an essentially creative force; in other words, it conveys a positive and even idealizing sense of it, exhibiting the truly feminine as it is experienced by an artist within the Symbolic order, under the prohibitive Law of the Father.

As argued above, Cytherea thus often figures in a pose most adequately described as one of "impassioned contemplation"; she is shown to gaze into the distance, as if admiring the scenery or the view. Like in a painting[56], however, Cytherea's gaze into the distance is turned inward, thus rather evoking the idea of the distant gaze of the inwardly absorbed; it is suggestive of a contemplative state of ecstasy, referred to by Walter Pater as typical of the poet or the artist. In Lacan's sense of the term "ex-sistence", using Heidegger's play on the root meaning of the Greek word for ecstasy, which means 'standing outside of' or 'standing apart from', and his play on its close connection with the root of the Greek word for existence, Cytherea's pose, which is characteristic, as we have observed, of many of Hardy's protagonists, iconizes her status in the narrative as "an existence that stands apart", which is "not included on the inside", which ex-sists, because it is not wholly in the phallic structure, and therefore escapes "the false being" of the Cartesian subject (*Encore* 1991, 22; Fink 1997, 42-45). Viewed at a meta-narrative level, Cytherea portrayed as an onlooker, standing apart, appears an effect of the unconscious of the text (E*ncore* 1991, 8-20, 112-117), as a metaphor displaying the feminine structure, the inner being alienated as the unknowable other, in the phallic structure of the symbolic Other of language which defines it.

Moreover, such passages in Hardy's novels, featuring characters like Cytherea in a "contemplative state" with an "inward gaze", are usually of a high poetic intensity which, as is characteristic of Hardy's fiction, calls forth connotative readings. In *Desperate Remedies* (1871), such passages with Cytherea, interpreted at a connotative level, are suggestive of her art-

[55] Ma Yuonglong, "Lacan on Gaze," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science.* Vol. 5 No 10 (1), October 2015.

[56] Emma Tornborg, *What literature Can Make Us See: Poetry, Intermediality, Mental Imagery* (Malmö: bokbox förlag, 2014) 26, 45-69. As Tornborg writes, "narrative as a notional iconic projection", formed of "iconic signs", was established as a genre during the Romantic era, using a visual presentation of notions, like in a painting, to point to meaning beyond denotation.

ist's insight into life, exhibiting the sense of her awareness of an "unknown Reality", of an "Unknowable" truth (Björk 1985, Vol. 2, 108) beyond the limits of reason. Understood in the perspective of Kristeva's theory of the subject in process, the narrative presents Cytherea as mother-identifying, indicating her insight into the workings of the Law of the Father against the territory of the mother; it illustrates Cytherea's sense of the hidden truth of the "impossible maternal fusion", impossible because it is prohibited within the Symbolic order, and which, being of an artistic disposition, she longs to re-experience (*Desire* 1982, 166).

In contrast to Cytherea, her brother Owen, very much like Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), is clearly father-identifying. As opposed to Knight who, as we shall see further on, shows signs of having a hyper-repressed creative streak, however, Owen is well integrated within the Symbolic order under the Law of the Father. Interpreted in terms of Lacan's theory of the subject, being "wholly determined by the phallic function" (Fink 1997, 106), Owen is totally satisfied with the norms of the Symbolic order, accepting its dictates of truth as the Truth. Described in accordance with Hardy's categorization of people and in his terms, Owen is thus of the "mechanical soulless" kind, while, as we have seen, Cytherea is of the "living". With Owen's propensity for the systematic and his unquestioning attitude to established opinion, showing either total acceptance or entire repudiation of its rule, he is therefore described thus in the novel:

> In Owen was found, in place of his father's impressibility, a larger share of his father's pride, and a squareness of idea which, if coupled with a little more blindness, would have amounted to positive prejudice. To him humanity, so far as he had thought of it at all, was rather divided into distinct classes than blended from extreme to extreme. Hence by a sequence of ideas which might be traced if it were worthwhile, he either detested or respected opinion. (11)

Moreover, when Owen and Cytherea are compared on their journey of escape from the sordid conditions of their life in Hocbridge to Budmouth after their father's death, though Owen is described as having some vital living substance, it is clearly more part of Cytherea's character. As brother and sister are compared in the narrative, therefore: "To see persons looking with children's eyes at an ordinary scenery is a proof that they possess the charming faculty of drawing new sensations from an old experience – a healthy sign, rare in these feverish days – the mark of an imperishable brightness of nature. Both brother and sister could do this; Cytherea more noticeably" (13). Here, also, the Neoplatonic idealizing view of the condition of childhood of the Romantics can be seen as transposed into the novel, where a child's expe-

rience of life is valorized for its creative potential and presented as a mark of quality: "the charming faculty of drawing new sensations from an old experience". Additionally, when considered in the positive tone of the narrative, the focus on Cytherea's more noticeable creative potential communicates a sense of sympathy for and even authorial identification with her character. As might be expected, therefore, Owen only plays a minor part in the novel, and hardly figures at all in its highly connotative, poetically charged passages.

It is therefore noteworthy that the passages where Cytherea appears in a highly symbolic context, evoking the sense of imprisonment or entrapment, have to do with the necessity of conforming to society. On the other hand, the passages featuring her in "impassioned contemplation" of a landscape or her surroundings are of a high level of poetic intensity, inspiring connotative readings of a different kind. Thus, on an excursion to Lulwind Cove with her brother Owen, like a foreshadow of the opening scene with Eustacia Vye in *The Return of the Native* (1878), Cytherea is shown standing alone on top of a hill gazing out over the sea and landscape, as if losing herself in the meditative state of an inward journey:[57]

> She remained on the summit where [Owen] had left her till the time of his expected return, scanning the details of the prospect around. Placidly spread out before her on the south was the Channel, reflecting a blue intenser by many shades than that of the sky overhead, and dotted in the foreground by half-a-dozen small craft of contrasting rig, their sails graduating in hue from extreme whiteness to reddish brown, the varying actual colours varied again in a double degree by the rays of the declining sun.
>
> Presently the distant bell from the boat was heard, warning the passengers to embark. This was followed by a lively air from the harps and violins on board, their tones, as they arose, becoming intermingled with, though not marred by, the brush of the waves when their crests rolled over – at the point where the check of the shore shallows was first felt – and then thinned away up the slopes of pebbles and sand.
>
> She turned her face landward […] Nothing was visible save the strikingly brilliant, still landscape. The wide concave which lay at the back of the hill in this direction was blazing with the western light, adding an orange tint to the vivid purple of the heather, now at the very climax of bloom […] The light so intensified the colours that they seemed to stand above the surface of

[57] Julia Kristeva *Soleil Noir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987). On the tendency to meditative states of inward journeys of the 'mother identifying'. 14, 141, 149, 157, 181-2, 197-8.

> the earth and float in mid-air like an exhalation of red. […] The last bell of the steamer rang. Cytherea had forgotten herself. (*Desperate* 1871, 19-20)

Ostensibly, Cytherea comes across as transported into an altered state of awareness, seemingly merging with the scenery, much like the experience celebrated by Wordsworth as characteristic of the poet and which in present-day terms we have seen referred to by Kristeva as jouissance. The motif of the landscape thus assumes the form of an externalization of Cytherea's inner state, presenting a notional-iconic projection of her flash of insight into her condition in life. Looking out onto the Channel, "reflecting a blue intenser by many shades than that of the sky overhead", thus exhibits her awakened awareness of her self-alienation, of her inner self reduced in the Other to the phallic function which defines her, as Lacan understands it (*Encore* 1999, 59-63; Fink 1997, 109-113). Or, when understood in Kristeva's terms, the narrative imparts Cytherea's flash of an insight into being "other than herself". For the Channel, with its flow, its currents and waves, as we shall see, appears to be an image of the disruptive flow of the creative impulse within Cytherea, since, as Kristeva interprets it, in works of fiction and poetry, the flow of water is a metaphor of the archaic universe of the territory of the Mother (*Histoires* 1983, 14-6).[58] Furthermore, although the color 'blue' generally reflects spirituality (Schottenius 1992, 88; Kristeva *Desire* 1982, 236), for C G Jung blue is the color of the Anima in the unconscious (*Memories* 1989, 314-20), while, according to Kristeva, dark blue, being the first color we experience in our development from birth, is associated with the archaic territory of the Mother (*Desire* 1982, 225).[59] Both in terms of spirituality and psychology, the color 'blue', however, connotes an experience of strong forces moving within us, whether of a spiritual kind or of the body. The Channel, of a "blue intenser" than that of the sky above, therefore, is significant when considering the implications of the color 'blue' in this context, where the scenery is taken as a projection of Cytherea's state of heightened awareness. With its lighter shades of blue, the sky here reflects the conscious mind, whose light blue is compared to the much "intenser" or darker blue of the Channel, thereby connoting the realm of the unconscious impulses. In this metaphorical manner, the lighter shades of blue of the sky

[58] Carl Gustav Jung, *Archetype and the Collective Unconscious* (New York: Routledge, 1991) 18, 81.
According to C G Jung, water is traditionally a common symbol for the unconscious; in his theory it is a symbol of the mother archetype.

[59] Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art.* Trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and L. Roudiez. Ed. L. Roudiez (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982) 225. Kristeva notes that of all the colours "[the] earliest appear to be those with short wavelengths, and therefore the colour blue" (225).

illustrate the effect of the conscious weakening the forceful, more intense, unconscious drives, as the "intenser" blue of the Channel appears diluted in the light blue sky.[60] The less intense blue of the sky here conjures the sense of illustrating the maternal territory invested in the paternal Symbolic order; it is suggestive of the sublimation of the disruptive semiotic which nourishes the socio-symbolic order. Thus, the rendering of the scenery, with the Channel and the sky delineated as they are, suggests the textual unconscious pictorially displaying a meta-narrative celebration of prohibited jouissance, whose force is revealed as nevertheless maintained within the Symbolic order, though prohibited by the Law of the Father with the emergence of the founding break of the thetic (Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 78-81).

Even more apparent in this passage, however, is the iconicity of the scene describing Cytherea in her trance-like state observing the craft gliding on the Channel. The craft, as viewed by Cytherea from above in the midst of a vast seascape, certainly figure the opposition of humanity versus nature, communicating the sense of society, or the social order, with its pretense at control over the strong forces of nature. Described from a distance, as in a painting reminiscent of the marine art of J. W. M. Turner, the craft appear tiny, vulnerable, and really at the mercy of the great powers of nature. The scene thereby evinces the idea of the illusory truth of man's capacity of full control in life; in Kristeva's terms, therefore, it is suggestive of the illusory truth of the Cartesian subject,[61] as we have previously explained her view of it.

Moreover, in this passage, it is dusk, and the whole scene is permeated with sunlight, generally intensifying its colors. Traditionally, as we have seen, sunlight symbolizes the creative force, and Kristeva, we know, maintains sunlight to be a metaphor of the archaic universe of the Mother, while the in-between state of sunset reflects the threshold experience of jouissance; the description of sunlight in creative writing is indicative of semiotic motility disrupting the structure of the Symbolic order as the motility of the drives affects the very experience of the artistically inclined. The sunlight infusing the scenery in the narrative thus reflects the artistic disposition of Cytherea, who is represented as if transported into a trance-like, otherworldly state. By means of this portrayal of Cytherea and the landscape, Cytherea's art-

[60] Julia Kristeva *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art.* Trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and L. Roudiez. Ed. L. Roudiez (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982) 235-6. See also Carl Gustav Jung *Arhetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (New York: Routledge, 1991) 93-4.

[61] Jacques Lacan, Écrits II (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971) 112-3. Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject. Between Language and Jouissance* (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997) 42-43. For reference to Lacan's view of the Cartesian subject as "false being", see Catherine Belsey, *Critical Practice* (London: Methuen, 1980). Belsey argues that the empiricist idealist position is ideology; it is an illusion preserving status quo of the social system.

ist's insight into the real as other than it seems, into her being other than herself, with potentially liberating forces within her, is pictorially suggested by the narrative. Viewed in the perspective of Kristeva's theory, therefore, the promise, or consolation, of the repressed maternal as a potentially disruptive force for an artist is here exhibited, capable of turning paternal abjection against itself; the prohibited maternal can be sublimated; that is, it can be re-experienced within the Symbolic order in creative activity, in works of art resounding with the echo of the maternal abject, in defiance of the prohibition of the Law of the Father (*Histoires* 1983, 258, 414-6).

As a metaphor of an experience of jouissance, therefore, the scene as it is described in the passage analyzed above appears an apology of transgression. The sunlight of dusk immersing the scene, conveying the sense of jouissance when interpreted in terms of Kristeva's theory of the subject in process, that is, also exhibits the jouissance of Thomas Hardy in his writing. As Kristeva argues, the experience of jouissance in writing reflects on a writer's text, since it is what accounts for the poetic intensity, the dream-like quality, which makes a text highly connotative. With regard to its symbolic quality and the nature of its symbols, as explained by Kristeva, a narrative imbued with jouissance exhibits "an open confrontation between jouissance and the thetic, that is, a permanent struggle to show the facilitation of the drives within the linguistic order itself" (*Revolution* 1984, 81); in other words, the passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1872) exemplified above reflects the denial of inner death which the Symbolic order represents for Hardy, exhibiting his transgression of the prohibition of the Law of the Father while working within it.

As the above quoted passage is here interpreted, Cytherea is awakened from her trance-like state by the bell of the boat, indicating that it is time to embark, signifying that she is brought back to the realization of living under the law of the social order. In other words, with the ring of the bell being a signal for the passengers to return to the boat, it suitably connotes the sense of how the Symbolic order under the Law of the Father is experienced by Cytherea; the ring of the bell, that is, is a depressing reminder for her of her everyday life with its inhibiting rules and social norms. In consonance with the above, therefore, further transfusing the portrayal of Cytherea's inner experience in this passage is the sense of Hardy the author being brought back, like Cytherea from her trance-like state by the ring of the bell, from a hazardous flash of jouissance when writing, to having to keep within the bounds of the novel genre. It is "hazardous" because, as Kristeva understands it, "trans-symbolic jouissance" threatens the unity of the subject, and, as, according to Kristeva, Plato has already understood it, it threatens the unity of the social order (*Revolution* 1984, 80, 96-8).

An apology of transgression is yet again asserted with the lines following the first ring of the bell in this passage, however, conveying the sense of disruptive jouissance within the bounds of the Symbolic order, in the form of a portrayal of artistic activity: "a lively air from the harps and violins on board, their tones, as they arose, becoming intermingled with, though not marred by, the brush of the waves when their crests rolled over". Here, the sound of the waves "intermingling" with the music[62] from the boat, while "not marring" it, is suggestive of disruptive "trans-symbolic jouissance" affecting the Symbolic order in a constructive way through creative activity. Once again, with its reference to a harmonious intermingling of music with the sound of waves, and through the imagery of a vessel, swayed by the rhythmic flow of water, with the people on board suggestive of life within the Symbolic order under the Law of the Father, subject to the heaving waves, the narrative displays itself as disrupted by semiotic motility; it reveals the trace of the disruptive semiotic of jouissance within it which accounts for its poetic intensity and musicalizes it (Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 78-80; *Histoires* 1983, 117-20).

During their journey back, when Edward accompanies Cytherea's return by boat, the couple discover their mutual attraction for each other: "a clear penetrating ray of intelligence had shot from each into each, giving birth to one of those unaccountable sensations which carry home to the heart before the hand has been touched or the merest compliment passed, by something stronger than mathematical proof, the conviction, 'A tie has begun to unite us'" (23). Though the source of the burgeoning tie between the couple is certainly one of desire, it appears to result from their mutual discovery of their affinity of temperament, like the experience of a merging of souls. It seems that a bond of tacit understanding is created between the two of them, with each recognizing the Socratic daimon of creativity[63] in the other; the mutual attraction, that is, is suggestive of a state of specular fascination, with each

[62] Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language.* Trans. Margaret Waller. Ed. L. S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1984) 98. On notions about dance and music as signs of the disruptive semiotic see also Plato, *Timaeus and Critias.* Trans. Desmond Lee (London: Penguin, 1977) 65. As Plato writes, "all audible musical sound is given us for the sake of harmony which has motions akin to the orbits in our soul […] a heaven sent ally in reducing to order and harmony any disharmony in the revolutions within us" which can be understood as describing a state reminiscent of that of catharsis. See also Walter Pater, *The Renaissance. Studies in Art and Poetry.* Ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press World's Classics, 1986) 88, 90. Pater maintains that music has a "unique mode of reaching the 'imaginative reason'" and that "It is the art of music which most completely realizes this artistic ideal [the] perfect identification of matter and form". As Pater further claims, it is therefore that which the arts aspire towards.

[63] Plato, *The Republic*. Trans. Francis Macdonald. Ed. 1972 (Cornford London: Oxford University Press, 1941).

recognizing the artistic disposition in the other (Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 94-5). As we shall see, the description of the surrounding scenery is highly suggestive of ideas pertaining to creativity pervading the narrative in the mode of a notional-iconic projection (Tornborg 2014, 50-51):

> A conversation began, which was none the less interesting to the parties engaged because it consisted only of the most trivial and commonplace remarks. Then the band of harps and violins struck up a lively melody, and the deck was cleared for dancing; the sun dipping beneath the horizon during the proceeding, and the moon showing herself at their stern. The sea was so calm that the soft hiss produced by the bursting of the innumerable bubbles of foam behind the paddles could be distinctly heard. The passengers who did not dance, including Cytherea and Springrove, lapsed into silence, leaning against the paddle-boxes, or standing aloof – noticing the trembling of the deck to the steps of the dance – watching the waves from the paddles as they slid thinly and easily under each other's edges. (*Desperate* 1871, 23)

Worth noticing in the above is that the couple appear to communicate beyond the words expressed, for their conversation is of a "most trivial" and "commonplace" kind, yet it holds them spellbound. Manifestly, their conversation mirrors only the surface of a much deeper, inexpressible communion of sensibilities, which fascinates and draws them towards each other. The narrative thus also appears self-reflective, exhibiting itself as artefact by exposing its mode of communicating through a mystical transmission of what Kristeva refers to as sense, from beyond the posited meaning of its words (Kristeva *Soleil* 1987, 37).

Further signs evocative of creativity are the harps of the band, for, suggestive of the traditional Romantic symbol of creative inspiration, the Aolian harp[64], the mention of harps calls forth the sense of the inexplicable experience of an artist's burst of inspiration, held to give insights into a greater truth. While the music of the band and the dancing more obviously impart the sense of artistic experience, the fact that some of the musical instruments are harps strengthens the impression of the narrative as multilayered and highly connotative, offering a signifiance pertaining to views of art and artistic sensitivity. Additionally, when considered in this context, the scene being imbued with the light of the sunset evokes the sense of the Platonic concept of the twilight zone of "doxa", imparting the view of life as illusion. Thus, the description of the characters imbued with the light of the sunset

[64] See Percy Bysshe Shelley *A Defense of Poetry and Other Essays*. Ed. Albert S. Cook. Boston: Gin & Company, 1891.

is suggestive of the couple's shared experience of life as mere appearance; as here interpreted, therefore, it can be seen to suggest the idea of their mutual longing for an impossible condition of authenticity. As David Melbye observes in his analysis of Plato's concept of the twilight zone, *Irony in the Twilight Zone* (2015), it can be understood as reflecting the human condition, that "what we perceive as reality is relative to the forces governing our perceptions" (32).[65] That such an insight into the human condition is distinctive of the creatively inclined can be understood to transfuse the portrayal of the couple in this scene, with the sunset imparting the sense of the two characters' mutual experience of life as an illusion. Indeed, in Kristeva's terms, the sunset is revelatory of the force of disruptive semiotic motility interfering with the denotative level of meaning, charging language with the inexpressible sense of its initial, formative split, giving rise to polysemy.

As we have seen, there is evidence of a connotative dimension of the narrative, evoking notions of creativity and the creative disposition through a signifiance, which opens the text to manifold interpretations. In addition to the sunset, the sea, the harps, the music and the dancing, therefore, there is the moon, which is yet another traditional symbol of creativity, suitably figuring in this passage. The couple decide not to dance, however, preferring to remain standing on deck, silently "watching the waves from the paddles as they slid thinly and easily under each other's edges". The emphasis on the couple's silence here calls to mind the Platonic view of silence, suggesting that their choosing to remain silent is an expression of their feeling of belonging together in their mutual awareness of a hidden greater truth beyond words. It is well known that the idea of silence as the path to Truth originates from eastern philosophy; it is perhaps the influence of eastern philosophy on Plato which Schleiermacher notices, therefore, when claiming that Plato's style was deliberately elusive, to allow the reader to perceive the "'inner' ineffable truths […] spiritually for themselves" (Rhodes *Eros* 2003, 41).[66]

Furthermore, in a similar mode, although not of the same substance as Plato's spirituality, the inexpressible maternal Chora, as explicated by Kristeva, reveals itself in moments of calm and silence as conveying the sense of life (*Histoires* 1983, 381, 386). Indeed, Cytherea and Edward apparently prefer to remain silent together; they appear to be communicating through silence, as if they are experiencing a sense of belonging, a shared insight into life, in mutual longing for the greater hidden truth. United in their sphere of silence, watching the water sliding from the paddles of the

[65] In D. Mellbye, *Irony in the Twilight Zone How the Series Critiqued Postwar American Culture* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).
[66] James M. Rhodes, *Eros, Wisdom, and Silence: Plato's Erotic Dialogues* (Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2003).

boat, with music and dancing all around, imbued with the light of the sunset and the rising moon, the whole scene suggests the couple's sense of primordial forces beyond the visible semblance of the real; it evokes the sense of their discernment that life is dynamic and ever-changing. Interpretable in Kristeva's terms, what is here projected is the couple's perception of the human condition of being a "subject in process". The narrative thus exhibits their sense of belonging together in a mutual sense of estrangement from themselves within the Symbolic order under the Law of the Father; thus, Cytherea and Edward appear in mutual yearning for a lost sense of self, for their lost inner being, for the lost truth of themselves; their mutual desire, that is, is evocative of the distinctive desire of the creatively inclined, for an immersion in maternal jouissance, for the experience of an in-between state, remaining in connection with the maternal from within the Law of the Father. In terms of Lacan's theory, an association between the sunset and Plato's twilight zone conveys the sense of the couple's feeling of alienation from the inexpressible Real in the Other of the phallic structure (Lacan *Ecrits I* 1966, 112-3); it exhibits their sense of not being wholly there, that "there is something more" (*Encore* 1999, 74); it presents their mutual sense of their ineffable reality beyond that of the phallic Other. As we shall demonstrate further on, there are quite a few passages which connote a sense of there being another dimension to the force of attraction between Cytherea and Edward. Such a sense transfuses the imagery of these passages, pointing to the couple's being drawn to each other like twin souls, in mutual inexpressible desire for a lost state of plenitude; the couple can be seen to meet in a mutual understanding of their desire for the abject territory of maternal jouissance (Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 213).

As with Cytherea and Edward in *Desperate Remedies* (1872), we have previously noted how Angel and Tess in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (189) reveal signs of a creative potential. For instance, Tess is subject to unexplainable inner states that give her an insight into life which clearly determines her actions. Of course, Tess's propensity to "travel in her mind" (*Tess* 1891, 175-176) to the stars, which makes her believe our souls can travel outside of our bodies, is really the expression of her imagination. In the narrative context, however it is suggestive of her artistic disposition, revelatory, in Kristeva's terms, of her capacity for jouissance. In Lacan's terms, it exhibits her tendency to experience the inner state of ecstasy characterized as sublimation or feminine jouissance. Interestingly, therefore, the ecstatic state, which Tess is usually held to attain at will, is noted to come to her spontaneously in the passage describing her response to Angel's harp playing; thus, it is set in motion by the burgeoning desire awakened in Tess by the undulating harp notes resounding from Angel's half-open window (179),

transfusing this passage which relates Tess's inner response to Angel's music to the visionary state of creative inspiration and desire, thus reflecting the more general idea of desire as the source of creativity.

As we have previously mentioned when arguing for the distinctive quality of the force of attraction between the couple Angel and Tess, Angel sets himself apart from the other men of his social class with his idealizing, Hellenic-inspired Romantic dream of starting afresh; unlike the academics of his time, he is determined to learn about life through experience, to develop in his own way by living a "simple life" in communion with Nature. Moreover, we have noticed that Tess is drawn to Angel more as an intelligence than as a man, placing her trust in his Idealism with its claim to respect her right to her life. In other words, Angel has a similar air of non-belonging about him as Tess. Diffuse and ethereal, therefore, the couple's desire appears less erotic than propelled toward an otherworldly experience, reminiscent of creative sublimation. As pointed out in the above, this sense of Angel's and Tess's desire certainly transfuses the passage relating the emotional resonance of Angel's harp-playing in Tess. Indeed, as it is depicted, it is suggestive of a moment's 'j'ouis-sense', where Tess is shown to 'hear' the full implications of Angel's cathartic sublimation of desire in the tones of his music. Similarly, in this passage, Angel can be seen to experience a flash of 'j'ouis-sense' brought about by Tess's characteristic "fluty voice" as it resonates with inner being (175).

Although the signs of jouissance, of the Lacanian jouissing substance and cathartic sublimation are numerous in the highly poetic rendering of Tess enraptured by Angel's harp playing, in this passage, however, a flash of the disruptive semiotic gives rise to an ambiguity in the portrayal of Elysian bliss, suggestive of the sense of abjection. Hence, the initial other-worldly silence is interrupted by the undulating note of a harp from Angel's room above, like celestial music, whose "harmonies passed like breezes" (179), with mists of pollen appearing in the light of dusk, floating in unison with the music like waves of color and sound, giving the impression of Angel's notes made visible. These are all signs of cathartic sublimation, of disruptive jouissance suggestive of its source as that of the couple's desire for each other. Nevertheless, the paradisal atmosphere is disturbed by "offensive smells", "slug slime" and "thistle milk", leaving Tess stained, as she is stained by the rape, thus signifying the process of abjection under the Law of the Father. In this manner, the force of the couple's desire is also symbolically exhibited in a phallic perspective as abject, as potentially malevolent and destructive. Interpretable as iconic signs transfused with signifiance, the references to offensive smells and slime leaving Tess stained are therefore equally suggestive of Tess's premonition, linking her burgeoning relation-

ship with Angel with a sense of imminent danger. Put differently by Margaret Higonnet in her "Introduction" (1998) to the novel: "The twang of the real briefly interrupts the transcendent movement of romance; it offers an unheeded warning to [Tess] as well. 'Et in Arcadia ego' – 'I too am in Arcadia says Death'" (xxx). Or, as Margaret Elvy reflects in *Sexing Hardy* (2007) in her Lacan-inspired essay "The Themes of Power, Images and Looking in *Far From the Madding Crowd*": "Lacanians would say love (erotic desire) is all done with mirrors, narcissistically reflecting each other" (81). That is to say, as A. Alvarez interprets it in the "Introduction" to the Penguin 5th edition of the novel (1978), it is a "strange, roused scene" with an "intense eroticism of the writing"; however, as Alvarez specifies, "the effect of it all is to produce in Tess a kind of trance, at once sensual and disembodied" (17). Thus, Alvarez comments that Hardy's portrayal of the state of desire, as a "ghostly, affectless drifting", with "the body going one way, the heart gone off elsewhere – like the chronic withdrawal and splitting of the schizophrenic", is revelatory of Hardy's gift as a poet with its roots in the unconscious (18). Characteristic of a piece of inspired writing, written in a state of jouissance, that is, the scene exhibits the characteristic ambiguity of Kristeva's definition of semiotic jouissance. As Margaret Higonnet notices in her "Introduction" (1998), therefore, the scene conveys a "mixture of misery and joy, dark and light [with] dazzling but malodorous weeds [conveying a world of idyllic romance] it is also anti-romantic. Where opposites touch" (xxxii). Meanwhile, Margaret Elvy in *Sexing Hardy* (2007) suggests that Tess is "pursued for being non-sexual [thus] Hardy shows how society polices itself, how it constructs its sexual norms" (68). Indisputably a passage of an extraordinary poetic intensity, however, in terms of the psychoanalytic semiotic theories of Kristeva and Lacan, the scene imparts the sense of the couple as being propelled toward the realm of the pre-symbolic maternal; in purely Lacanian terms it conveys the sense of the couple's desire for the Other jouissance.

PART III: NARRATIVE STRATEGIES

As mentioned in the introductory section above, there is a distinctive poetic quality in Hardy's prose, which is important to consider when analyzing his novels in the light of Kristeva and Lacan's psychoanalytic semiotic theories. The passages of Hardy's novels analyzed in this part of the project have thus been specifically selected for what Hardy himself would have defined their "poetic intensity". Accordingly, these passages will here be considered in terms of the various effects they can be seen to reveal of Hardy's creative sublimation in writing.

1. The textual unconscious

We have previously observed Kristeva's view that self-reflectivity is produced through an authorial transgression of the Law of the Father. As expressed by Kristeva, it is a sign of semiotic motility working through and disrupting the Symbolic order, investing the text with a surplus sense[67], in defiance of the One. Self-reflecivity is seen as resulting from an unconscious, trans-conscious (*Soleil* 1987, 37) transference of the author's resistance to symbolic abjection while writing. Self-reflectivity, that is, exhibits the author's resistance to the Symbolic order; it betrays his defiance of the boundaries of symbolic meaning, which is to say the social and political matrices of identity. Accordingly, self-reflectivity in narrative fiction signifies that semiotic motility has disrupted its textual boundaries; it reveals the effect on writing of momentary flashes of the heterogeneity of the drives; that is, it is indicative of the author's unconscious, revealing the sense that "Ego affectus est" (194).

More specifically in this context, however, the selected passages from Hardy's novels here analyzed clearly reflect his view of good writing pointed out earlier, when discussing his resistance to the mode of realism. As we know, Hardy believed that the best way to write good prose was to write it like poetry, by allowing the poetic imagination to have a free flow. Favoring literature written with a "poetic intensity", as already stated, Hardy believed it had the power of poetry to communicate a sense of the hidden truth of life. As Rana Kant Sharma writes in *Hardy and the Rasa Theory* (2003): "[Hardy] tried to raise the standard of the novel by infusing into it a poetic intensity […] He could not think that anybody could be a novelist without having poetic talent" (16). In line with such a view of Hardy's attitude to writing prose, Margaret Higonnet remarks in her "Introduction" (1998) to

[67] Julia Kristeva, *Histoires d'amour* (Paris: Folio essais, 1983) 59-60, 168-9, 337. See also Julia Kristeva, *Soleil Noir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987) 180. Kristeva uses the French term 'sens' in all its ambiguity as both 'meaning' in a strict sense, and the more intuitive 'feeling' or 'experience' of signifiance.

Tess (1891), "[so] he turned to 'apparently irregular modes of narrating' that displaced genre conventions with their precepts of unity of plot and uniformity of tone" (xxix).

According to Kristeva, as previously noted, self-reflective narrative is poetic in that it exhibits the process of abjection by recovering its dynamics within its own signifying space. As exemplified in Part II of this study, such instances of authorial trans-conscious transference can be found in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), as exemplified with Cytherea's letter of rejection, made highly ambiguous because she is forced to write it against her will. The ambiguity of meaning in Cytherea's letter, however, is not the result of a conscious effort, as Manston's ability to communicate beyond words is shown to be in another passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), describing his attempt to seduce Cytherea. In fact, Manston's talent for communicating his desire for Cytherea without expressly putting it into words is compared with the poetic talent of none other than Wordsworth. As it is described, therefore: "Manston introduced into his method a system of bewitching flattery, everywhere pervasive, yet, too, so transitory and intangible, that, as in the case of the poet Wordsworth and the Wandering Voice, though she felt it present, she could never find it" (177-8). Manston's talent for implicitly conveying meaning beyond the word is not only associated with the talent of a poet, however. The narrative context in which this talent is described also implicitly conveys the idea of it being associated with the art of seduction, thus moreover suggesting that desire is its source. From that perspective, this passage can be interpreted as a self-reflective instance in the narrative, exposing the poetic mode as a form of seduction, with its source in desire.

A similar passage to the one analyzed above, likening Manston's talent for communicating beyond words to that of a poet, appears in another part of *Desperate Remedies* (1871). This time Cytherea is shown to make a conscious attempt to get Edward to hear her true feelings behind the words she expresses when refusing his kiss, the permission of which would be a violation of social norms. Cytherea's situation, when answering Edward's request to kiss her, is thus described as follows: "Her endeavor was to say No, so denuded of its flesh and sinews that its nature would hardly be recognized, or in other words a No from so near the affirmative frontier as to be affected with the Yes accent" (37). Though manifestly giving voice to a common prejudice against women, which was especially used against them in discriminatory legal proceedings, as described in this context the situation can rather be understood to challenge the positivist logical view of language as the fundamental premise of representational realism. Thus, as previously demonstrated, a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) conveys the dilemma of women living under the Law of the Father, which is the

law of patriarchy: "the woman who tells the truth & is not a liar about her sexuality is untrue to her sex & abhorrent to man, for he fashioned a model on imaginary lines & he said, 'every woman is an unconscious liar, for so man loves her'"(Vol. 2, 69). Acquainted with the consequences for women of living under the Law of the Father, therefore, Hardy was evidently aware that it was not always easy for women to know their own minds. Yet the capacity to convey an implicit opposite sense to the words uttered, as Cytherea is described as doing in the above, is suggestive of desire as a potentially disruptive countercurrent flowing against the prohibitive rule of the Law of the Father. Tending to fracture discourse, the disruptive potential of desire as an articulation of jouissance is shown to give rise to an ambiguity of meaning, with poetic effects. In the context of this study, that is, understood as self-reflective, the passage quoted above, with its presentation of feminine desire as fracturing the phallic domain of unitary meaning, thus figuratively associates the force capable of generating poetic effects with the 'feminine'.

The passage describing Owen and Cytherea discussing their discovery that their father's first love affair had been with Miss Aldclyffe is yet another passage of self-reflective narrative in *Desperate Remedies* (1871). Thus, Cytherea is shown to observe: "And how strangely knowledge comes to us. We might have searched for a clue to her secret half the world over, and never found one. If we had really any motive to discover more of the sad history than papa told us, we should have gone to Bloomsbury; but not caring to do so, we go two hundred miles in the opposite direction, and there find information waiting to be told us" (8-9). Apparently alluding to the miraculous in the situation, Cytherea seems relieved to discover that life is not always rationally determined; to put it another way, the description of Cytherea as finding comfort in the idea of there being forces which escape our control and understanding in life foregrounds a generally positive view of life as determined by uncontrollable, irrational forces, implicitly including such a view of the inexplicable forces involved in writing. In other words, in the passage quoted above, the description of a quest for meaning in a story, whose denouement is revealed by going against the word of the Father, "in the opposite direction", is thus suggestive of a self-reflexivity in the narrative, transfusing an authorial trans-conscious encouragement of the form of reading which gives "pleasure up the avenues off the main road" (*Notebooks* Björk 1985, Vol. 2, 288). Interpreted in the light of such a reading of the passage, that is, Cytherea's observation on the mysterious workings of life is suggestive of the sense of Hardy's view on writing, that "the shortest way to good prose is by route of good verse" (Orel 1966, 145). Accordingly the passage can be understood to convey an implicit hint of Hardy's view of his writing of fiction as an "idiosyncratic mode of regard", which is best read

like poetry, by being appreciated beyond the thread of the plot, for a deeper sense implicitly conveyed "with more poignancy than is possible with words" (Björk *Notebooks* 1985, Vol. 2, 417).

In a similar way, in the passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) where Cytherea accepts to become Miss Aldclyffe's companion, the idea conveyed of achieving one's ends by indirect means, in opposition to what rationality dictates, suggests a trans-conscious authorial sense with a bearing on writing and the interpretation of texts: "once more the history of human endeavor, a position which it was impossible to reach by any direct attempt, was come to by the seeker's swerving from the path, and regarding the original object as one of secondary importance" (79). Significantly, a similar idea is expressed at the end of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), when Knight is forced to come to terms with himself with regard to the failure of his relationship with Elfride. Thus, Knight is described as realizing that he has "missed the mark by excessive aiming" (264).

As previously mentioned, Suzanne Keen has observed about Hardy's writing in her study *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014), "Hardy's was an art of undermining certainties, or qualifying conclusions" (108). Noticing Hardy's tendency to portray situations of misinterpretation and misunderstanding (66), Keen, however, interprets this as revealing Hardy's motive of demonstrating how the characters' "conditions of not-knowing", their "incomplete [understanding and] self-understanding" (64-6), affect their lives. On the other hand, in the context of this study, the description of Dick's bewilderment when trying to understand "that dear impossible Fancy" in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872, 84, 87, 125-7) appears to refer to issues of representation and interpretation. In line with the perspective of this project, therefore, Dick's situation with Fancy reads as a trans-conscious self-reflective instance in the narrative, implicitly imparting views on language and the interpretative act of reading. What thus transfuses the portrayal of Fancy as mystifying not only Dick, but her whole community (108), is the view of the phallic function of symbolic language, under the Law of the Name of the Father, which is that of patriarchy. As Penny Boumelha observes in her essay "The Patriarchy of Class"(1999): "The reader is given virtually no direct representation of any desire, intention or feeling of Fancy's, all must be inferred from the commentaries and interpretations of […] others, and are usually generalized on the basis of gender" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 136). Unlike Dick, whose thoughts and feelings are made apparent to the reader, therefore, Fancy is described superficially throughout the novel, solely through her actions, and as she is experienced by her community. With Fancy's return to her home village as an educated woman, however, as Boumehla notes, Fancy is focalized as the only young and marriageable

woman "of any significance in the text [thus, she] is almost the exclusive focus of both erotic attention and gender generalizations" (147). Indeed, Fancy is invariably represented by the narrative voice as interpreted by the male characters. More generally, however, as Suzanne Keen ascertains in *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014), there are "Gaps in the characters' knowledge [as] Hardy closes the minds of the characters to one another" (65). For instance, it is never made clear to the reader whether Fancy's flirt with Shiner had actually taken place or whether it was just invented by Fancy to test Dick in his love by arousing his jealousy (*Greenwood* 1872, 143-6). Moreover, when Fancy reveals her father's decision that Shiner should become his future son-in-law, this comes as a great surprise to both the reader and to Dick (146). Additionally, in the chapter "Going Nutting", the true motive behind Fancy's provocative behavior towards Dick remains a mystery. For, considering her father's expressed view that she is highly intelligent (167), there seems to be more involved here than a trifling concern to impress with her dress on Sundays (154-6).

In a similar way, Fancy's behavior is mystifying when, in hysterical tears, she gives in to the Vicar's seduction, accepting his offer to be his wife (183-4), only to rescind her answer in a letter already the next day (188-9). As one of the rustics observes in consternation over Fancy at one point: "The littler the maid, the bigger the riddle" (108); the depiction of her as enigmatic therefore suggests a metalinguistic awareness reflected in the text of patriarchal structures as relative to language. Thus, according to Boumelha "Fancy's role […] is to represent femaleness, it does not depend upon, or even require, any individualization of her" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 116). Understood as a metaphor of the condition of woman and the truly feminine within the paternal realm in a patriarchal society, therefore, the portrayal of Fancy implicitly imparts that the truly feminine must always elude comprehension within the frame of reference of the paternal (Mill *On Liberty* 1975, 427-584). Accordingly, in her essay cited above, Boumelha cites Simon Gatrell's reflection on Fancy as a metaphor of the feminine condition in a patriarchal society: "the novel is full of expressions of suspicion and distrust toward women" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 136), Moreover, in *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism* (2005), Gale Gatrell notices how the view of the feminine is figuratively conveyed in the text as threatening, because it is a potentially disruptive force within the patriarchal social order, "from the moment when Fancy's boot disrupts the group by compelling their attention at once to its workmanship and its embodiment of femininity" (205). As we have seen, such a view of the truly feminine, as a threatening disruptive force within patriarchy under the Law of the Father, is also integral to the present-day theories of Kristeva and Lacan.

Understood at a meta-narrative level, the portrayal of Fancy as an enigmatic figure impossible to get hold of can, however, be understood as a metaphor of the short story itself, in which Fancy nevertheless plays a central part, albeit as a voiceless all-pervading presence; as previously argued, she is portrayed as an intangible force of disruption. In this regard, Fancy can be seen as a lighter foreshadow of the much later, mystifying, intriguing character Eustacia Vye, whose voiceless centrality in *The Return of the Native* (1878), as we have seen, is of a darker and more ominous kind than Fancy's. However, featuring a feminine character as a voiceless, ubiquitous presence with a disruptive influence on her surroundings, the narrative in both of these novels is equally suggestive of the sense of the workings of maternal jouissance, of the truly feminine within the Symbolic order, bound by the Law of the Father. Interpreting the character Fancy in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) at a meta-narrative level, in this way, makes the narrative of the whole novel self-reflective. Conceivably, therefore, the rustic's comment would then be understood as signifying: "The shorter the story, the bigger the riddle". For, like its fragmentary portrayal of Fancy, who, after all, plays a major role in the story, the story cannot be totalized into a consistent, final interpretation. Therefore, the reader is placed in a situation, vis-à-vis the story, very much like that of Dick and the rustics, when trying to interpret Fancy's motives for her behavior. The case with Dick is even more telling, however, when, at the end of the story, he is shown as believing that he fully comprehends her, but Fancy eludes him still (108). More generally reflecting the idea of elusive reality, what thereby comes across as strongly disputed, however, is the claim that literature is 'a slice of life', since, as is expressed in a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), "The order of notions in the best mind, & in the highest achievements of all the minds together, is infinitely short of reflecting the order of things in nature, either in exactness or in completeness" (Vol. 1, 197). As we have seen, being well read in theories of language, representation and visual perception, Hardy appears to have been especially interested in ideas questioning the possibility of unmediated experience, while being negative towards theories of transparency in language. Of course, many critics, including Hillis Miller, Penelope Vigar, J.B Bullen, Linda Shires, George Wotton, Suzanne Keen and Patricia Ingham, to name but a few, have analyzed Hardy's fiction in the light of philosophical notions of the discrepancy between perception and reality. Here, however, the implications of the varied appearance of such ideas in Hardy's novels are studied in terms of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality.

Hence, in yet another figurative and evidently self-reflective passage, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) implicitly questions the view that language

is a mirror of reality, thereby also implicitly questioning the ideal of realism that literature should present 'a slice of life'. Clearly suggestive of how perception distorts reality, as we shall see, the passage may also be understood to convey the idea of how language relates to perception; that is, it can be seen to display how language shapes or determines reality, and in extension, therefore, to impart the implications of this for literary realism. Fancy is thus described as looking through the window of "knotty glass of various shades of green. Nothing was better known to Fancy than the distorted extravagant manner these circular knots or eyes distorted everything seen through them" (*Greenwood* 1872, 111). Fancy's experience, that is, not only suggests her artist's insight into living in a world of mere appearances; interpreted in the context of this project as invested with signifiance, the narrative is indicative of an authorial trans-conscious transferral of the ideas of his reading on the influence of language in shaping experience; it communicates that reality is other than we perceive it. Accordingly, transfusing the narrative is also Hardy's conviction that the truth is best conveyed in fiction through the author's "idiosyncratic mode of regard" (Millgate *Life* 1984, 182-3), by means of which literature can present a "criticism of life" (Björk *Psychological Vision* 1987, 70-5) more strongly than the realist mode. As Hardy expressed it when questioning the tenability of the central tenet of realism, namely that literature should give a faithful, objective representation of reality: "The poetry of a scene varies with the minds of the perceivers. Indeed, it does not lie in the scene at all" (52). In other words, Hardy believed that an artist or a poet implicitly conveyed the hidden sense of reality behind the veil of language by revealing, through a distortive, poetic rendering of experience, how the power of language works to shape reality.

A similar figurative self-reflective passage is found in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), which, imparting ideas about a deceptive surface meaning and its modes of interpretation, encourages an association of ideas with the experience of reading. The passage describes Manston unconsciously taking in the scene, while looking out at the Strand: "tall men looking insignificant; little men looking great and profound, lost women looking[…] happy; wives, happy by assumption, looking careworn and miserable. Each and all were alike in this one respect, that they followed a solitary trail like the in-woven threads which form a banner, and all were equally unconscious of the significant whole they collectively showed forth" (258). Worthy of note in Manston's experience of the scenery and his reflections thereon is the analogy which can be drawn with the experience of reading. Hence there are references to the following of "trails", to "inwoven threads which form a banner", to the "significant whole" they form when viewed "collectively", which all allude to a context of interpretation. The references, being sugges-

tive of the activity of reading, therefore, and more specifically of the reading of literature, indicate a self-reflective instance in the narrative, forming the author's trans-conscious hint of what attitude to adopt when reading his work. It is well known that Hardy wished his novels to be regarded as "impressions" only, as expressions of a "vision" (Orel 1966, 116; Vigar 1974, 5, 8), something he also emphasized in his Preface to the Fifth and Later Editions of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) in the Penguin Classics edition (1975, 38). Or, as Penelope Vigar observes in *The Novels of Thomas Hardy: Illusion and Reality* (1974), Hardy "sees the plot as a thread on which to display his pictures on, his 'meanings' or glimpses into 'the heart of the matter'" (8). Manston's experience of the scenery thus suggests Hardy's views on literature and literary appreciation. As the passage implies when regarded as being self-reflective, its 'vision', its reflection of 'the heart of the matter' only comes across to the reader if its "in-woven threads" are collectively taken into consideration as a "significant whole". In the present-day terms of Kristeva, it is a reading which takes the underlying pattern of the signifiance of the narrative into account.

Again, the situation of the reader is reflected in that of the characters in the second part of *Desperate Remedies* (1871), often criticized for having the characteristics of a Wilkie Collins novel. Understood as covertly self-reflective, the narrative describing the detective and Miss Aldclyffe's blind search in the dark for the meaning of the mystery of Manston reflects the situation of the reader's quest for meaning in a novel. Here, however, the experience of the characters in their following of trails, their conjectures and attempts at interpretation of what prove to be merely false tracks, also suggest an implicit dissuasion of the type of reading Hardy disfavored. The characters, figuratively conveying the idea of such a reading, merely preoccupied with arriving at a full understanding of the sequence of events, therefore, covertly exhibit such a mode of reading as a negative groping in the dark. Likewise, in the light of this, the discovery of the dead body of a murder victim, signifying the idea of lifelessness, death and the act of killing, self-reflectively conveys further implications of such a plot-oriented reading of the novel, associating it with a murder of its inner life.

Viewed as a meta- or mater-narrative as defined by Kristeva or Lacan, the episode delineating the detective and Miss Aldclyffe groping in the dark in their quest for meaning evinces a flash[68] of the murder at the heart of a literary text whose creative flow of the maternal semiotic Chora has not been

[68] Julia Kristeva, *Black Sun Depression and Melancholia.* Trans. Leon S. Roudiez *(*New York: Columbia UP, 1987) 366, quoted in *Studies on Themes and Motifs in Literature: Beauty and the Abject Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Eds. Leslie Boldt-Irons, Corrado Federici, Ernest Virgulti (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Ltd, 2007) 53. Kristeva defines a "flash" as "[a] fading of meaning at the same time as a conveyance of meaning".

allowed free movement through its symbolic structure; it thereby exhibits a moment of authorial cathartic abjection figuring the prohibition of jouissance as "the murder of the soma" (Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 75) within such texts. More generally, the narrative symbolically presents the sacrifice of the body within the Symbolic order, signifying "the structural violence of language's irruption as 'the murder of the soma'" (75). In Lacanian terms, the text displays the murder at the heart of our coming-to-be in language, where the discovery of the dead body figuratively exhibits "physiology giving way to the signifier", revealing how "the letter kills [the body to] live in its place" (Fink 1997, 12), giving rise to desire, always "in excess" (95) of the "letter", in the pursuit of truth (95).

As previously mentioned, Hardy's Literary Notebooks (Björk 1985) give evidence that he was an eclectic reader with a broad spectrum of interests, ranging from philosophical issues involving the concepts of truth and experience, of reality versus perception, to theories of aesthetics, art, poetics, literature, language and social politics.[69] Nevertheless, more than indicating the scope of his reading, Hardy's Literary Notebooks (1985) can also be seen to reveal his personal preference for theories questioning the view of a one-to-one relationship between semantic contents and the expressions of language. In any case, as argued for in this project, there are detectable traces of views on perception and language challenging the tenets of realism in the text of Hardy's novels. Suggestive of ideas opposing those of the literary movement of realism, that is, the trace of these ideas in Hardy's novels can

[69] See *The Literary Notebooks* Ed. Lennart Björk (1985) 2 vols. "'Nature' is an illusory play of light and shadow on a perpetual changing network of nerves. And the 'mirror' that we are told to hold up to 'nature' is a hurrying torrent of feeling and thought. There are no truisms, no rules in art, as in anything else" (*Notebooks II)* entry 2421 (215). The influence of Platonic thought is revealed in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* as follows: "[…] the material is not the real […] the real being invisible optically. [It] is because we are in a somnambulistic hallucination that we think the real to be what we see as real". That the communicative power of rhythm, and melody is artistically superior to that of words see (*Notebooks II*) entry 2041 (93). See also entry 2499 (288-9), entries 2578-80 (404-5), entry 2629 (418-9). For the idea that the contemplation of Art involves a 'communion of souls'; that there is a communication beyond words in Literature, see (*Notebooks I*) entry 1491 (195). Michael Millgate, *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy* (London: Macmillan, 1984) 192. In (*Notebooks III*) entry 2417 (288). "[The] great poets re-make the world for us […] by an incantation […] so that we see it under a light that is not the light of time". "[…] all literature, pure literature, falls into two categories song and story, and that the highest literature is both – the story that is sung" (*Notebooks III*) entry 2531 (362). On the artistic superiority of the communicative power of suggestion to that of words see (*Notebooks II)* entry 1823 (35), entry 1887 (48). See also *Notebooks III* entry 2621 (415). "Language is everywhere half sign; its hieroglyphics, the dumb modes of expression, surpass speech. All action, indeed, is besides action, language; if you do not do it, that is language" (*Notebooks* II) entry 1966 (69). There is also the previously mentioned work on Hardy's eclectic reading, *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

be understood to reveal his reading preferences which he has accordingly transposed into his writing. As Hardy once expressed his anti-realism stand:

> To see in half and quarter views the whole picture, to catch from a few bars the whole tune, is the intuitive power that supplies the would-be-story-writer with the scientific bases for his pursuit. He may not count the dishes at a feast, or accurately estimate the value of the levels in a lady's diadem; but through the smoke of those dishes, and the rays from these jewels, he sees written on the wall:
>
> We are such stuff
>
> As dreams are made of, and our little life
>
> Is rounded with a sleep!

Thus, as aforesaid, an attempt to set forth the Science of Fiction in calculable pages is futility; it is to write a whole library of human philosophy, with instructions how to feel. (Orel 1966, 137-38)

2. Narrative *jouissance*

In unison with many other literary scholars studying Hardy's fiction, Hillis Miller highlights its characteristic rendering of human beings as restricted from birth by their community, social class, sex, nation and family (78-9)[70], communicating that we are "not born free" (2). Again, in *Knowledge and Survival in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (2000) Jane Mattisson remarks on Hardy's having recorded at length passages from the works of J. S Mill, whose influence is also highly noticeable in Hardy's novels, especially in the portrayal of the characters as formed by circumstance. In view of this, Mattisson observes, the novels convey a questioning of the prevailing belief of the innateness of personality traits, imparting that such a view is a major hindrance to human development (23).

As mentioned above, in *Thomas Hardy, Distance and Desire* (1970), however, Hillis Miller argues for the influence on Hardy of Schopenhauer's concept of "the Immanent Will", interpreting Hardy's novels in terms of a cosmic fatalism. Miller's analysis, however, is on a par with the present project which, in line with the readings of Margaret Elvy, Jane Thomas, Barbara Schapiro and Joanna Devereux, to name but a few, sets out to study

[70] Perry Miesel, *The Return of the Repressed* (London: New Haven, 1972) 132. Meisel observes that the divided self is a major concern in Hardy's last two novels, with, as she expresses it, "the mutually destructive interdependence of flesh and spirit", with "flesh" referring to the sexual and "spirit" to social sanctions.

the motif of unfulfilled desire in Hardy's novels. As Hillis Miller notes, "The main characters of [Hardy's] novels[…] are not satisfied by the life that is natural in their communities. They are tormented by unassuaged longings for something more" (*Distance* 1970, 112-3).

Indeed, as we have previously mentioned, the motif of unfulfilled desire has practically become Hardy's mark as an author, so much so that, when viewing his novels in the light of Kristeva's theory, the all-pervasive sense of desire in Hardy's novels is interpretable as the trace of the pre-conscious in the narrative, displaying the inexpressible, prohibited desire for the ever-lost object of the maternal space. Understood from the perspective of Kristeva's theory, therefore, desire, present everywhere in Hardy's novels, evokes the sense of artistic experience. This accounts for the characteristic dream-like atmosphere in Hardy's fiction, for the poetic quality of its narrative which, if appreciated as poetry, transports the reader beyond the 'mirage' of denotation to its full enjoyment through the sub- or inter-text of its 'unconscious'.[71] Interestingly, therefore, a corresponding view is formulated in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985):

> Plato is there, of course, to begin with; and some suggestion of the long line of mystics and spiritual poets of whom he is the father. The questions are our questions too; the ultimate "how" and "for what reason" which never finds an ultimate "in this way" and "for this reason"; the old and new answer of silence and acquiescence, and the eternal escape from it into the answer of dream and vision, which transcends logic and defies sense. (Vol. 2, 269)

Thus, commenting on his novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Hardy writes: "The place is pre-eminently […] the region of dream and mystery. [All the things in it] lend to the scene an atmosphere like the twilight of a night vision" (Orel 1966, 7). In the light of this, therefore, noticing Hardy's distinctive portrayal of his tragic heroines in her study, *The Novels of Thomas Hardy: Illusion and Reality* (1974), Penelope Vigar perceives Eustacia as "an escapist living in a dream world" (140), while she deems that Tess is "shown as a dreaming half-wild creature, caught in a twilight world whose brutality does not really touch her" (187). As Vigar further notes about the portrayal of Tess, "everything appears through the 'highly charged atmosphere' in which she is living" (188). In other words, the heroines appear to

[71] Jacques Lacan, "The Insistence of the Letter in the Unconscious," David Lodge, *Modern Criticism and Theory*. Ed. (London and New York: Longman, 1988) 80-105. See also Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits II* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971) 20. See also Julia Kristeva *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Trans. Margaret Waller. Ed. L. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984) 81, 159.

live in a dreamlike state of detachment from reality, giving the impression that they do not feel they belong in this world. Arguing in consonance with the view held by Plato in *The Republic* (1972), however, that the "twilight realm" belonged to the dreamer, who, living in ignorance of the realm of Absolute Knowledge and the Truth of the Forms, believed in that which merely 'seemed'(180, 181, 219, 221-226), Vigar interprets Hardy's tragic heroines as living in a "dream world [a] twilight world" in a negative light. In other words, according to Vigar, the state of living in a "dream world [a] twilight world", the escapism, that is, of Hardy's tragic heroines, propels them towards disaster because it hinders them from apprehending the objective truth.

Hardy's heroines are undeniably characterized by their escapism, which is a trait already noticeable in Cytherea, the heroine of Hardy's earliest novel, *Desperate Remedies* (1871). As considered in this project, however, escapism is rather identified as a sense of longing, of lack, and as an ineffable desire for an unattainable ideal existence in life, interpreted as the sign of a potentially creative imagination. Escapism is thus associated with the positive state of empowerment by the poetic spirit which provides glimpses of the truth beyond the veil of illusory reality, giving an insight into life. Cytherea hence prefigures Eustacia, Tess and Sue, as we have seen, for, like them, she experiences states of "impassioned contemplation", interpretable as visionary states of poetic insight into the veiled truth of reality, referred to in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) as an "unconscious thinking" (Vol. 2, 109).

In the present-day theoretical terms of Kristeva, as previously noted, this 'twilight' state is explained as the mark of mother identification; it is distinctive of the rebellious, creatively inclined, in comparison with those who are father identifying, whose unified subject position is characterized by being socially well integrated. As Kristeva explains it, the subject "is always **both** semiotic **and** symbolic" (*Revolution* 1984, 24); only the mother-identifying creative, aspiring for existence within the maternal territory, however, are experientially aware of the truth of the split subject in language, of our 'twilight' existence as subjects "in process", as a "repeated scission of matter" (167, 176). However, the view of the universal truth as eternal flux, motion and change belongs to the Heraclitean school of thought, whose ideas are amply quoted in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), thus revealing his strong interest in this mode of thought. Indisputably, as argued in the context of this project, Hardy's reading of the Heraclitean view of life can be seen to shine through the narrative of his fiction, so much so that Hardy's transposition of his reading of the Heraclitean ideas into his novels can account for their affinity with Kristeva's view of life. As one of Hardy's

quotations reads, therefore: "The animation of the germ does not follow but **precedes** the **origin** of the germ" (Vol. 2, 112).

As mentioned above, however, the return of maternal motility into the symbolic, that is, the return of the repressed semiotic maternal in language, accounts for the poetic quality of a text; the semiotic maternal disrupting language reconnects language with its maternal source, which nourishes it with the creative energies of the semiotic; the maternal disruptive semiotic nourishing the text hence gives it a poetic intensity, with highly connotative words making it multidimensional. Accordingly, offering a variety of levels of interpretation, the text nourished with the maternal semiotic becomes poetic, producing a dream-like atmosphere, almost like that of an expressionist painting. In the following, we will focus on the passages evidently nourished with the creative energies of the maternal semiotic in Hardy's afore-mentioned novels, to study the traces of jouissance within the signifying process of their text. When pertinent, we will also apply Lacan's theory in analyzing these passages. We will thus identify the textual signs of the jouissing substance (Fink 1997, 119) held as revelatory of the underlying feminine structure of the text; they are interpreted as indicative, that is, of authorial cathartic sublimation (115). With many passages in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) being highly connotative, therefore, it seems particularly suitable to begin with this novel as an example in this section, to illustrate the form of interpretation of Hardy's fiction argued for above.

There are manifold signs of the influence on Hardy of his reading of the Greek Classics in his novels, as already noted; however, the influence of Plato and Aristotle seems especially apparent in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872). For instance, in its opening scene, describing the appearance of a group of men wholly immersed in darkness, much is made of how everything is reduced to "flat outlines", giving rise to a "loss of rotundity" of things (34). Thus, with the prevailing darkness, "all appeared […] as black and flat outlines upon the sky" (33). Not merely described by its effect, however, darkness is also associated with the group of men immersed in it, a group, moreover revealed to be an all-male church choir, which, being a fellowship of men in cooperation, makes it a perfect image of the paternal realm. In this manner, the whole picture of the scene appears an iconic projection of the idea of the patriarchal social realm, under the Law of the Father, as essentially inhibiting, distorting and associated with darkness.

Transposed into Kristeva's terms, the narrative here exhibits the trace of disruptive jouissance within it, as levels of connotation, revealing the Law of the Father as the paternal prohibition of the excessive, creative feminine of the maternal space. For the darkness of the night is lit up by stars, which are likened to deities or angels with their twinkling and flickering, which

"seemed like the flapping of wings" (33). Indeed, Hardy's reading of Plato is evidently transposed into this novel, according to whom the stellar universe was the realm of the Gods (*Phaedrus* 1973, 54-6); it was the realm of Truth and the infinite (*Timaeus* 1977, 51-61). Thus, the scene is interpretable as an image, displaying the juxtaposition of the mortal or the finite, exemplified by the male choir immersed in darkness as described above, and the immortal or the infinite, rendered by the flickering stars as a metaphor for the deities. Understood in this manner, the narrative unfolds as a vista on art, also conveying the view of the ancient Greeks on art, as observed by Walter Pater: "[Art] being itself the finite, ever controlling the infinite, the formless" (*Plato* 1910, 60).

By the same token, the narrative becomes self-reflective, exhibiting interpretative levels of its own composition, revealing its flat, restrictive level of denotation, enlightened by the flashes of its 'soul', which charges it with a 'poetic intensity', making it highly connotative (Pater, *Appreciations* 1915, 27).[72] Thus, metaphorically portrayed when expressed in Kristeva's terms, is the idea of a text lacking in jouissance as flat, with a limited interpretative scope, set against the illuminating flashes of jouissance, or the Lacanian jouissing substance of creative sublimation, opening possibilities of manifold interpretations.

Seeing that stellar light is implicitly associated with the sphere of the deities, thus poignantly suggesting its link with creative energy. This connection is strengthened further still when considered in relation to Aristotle's reasoning: "it is from light […] that imagination takes its name" (*de Anima* 1986, 20). That light is associated with imagination and the infinite, or the creative impulse, in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), where it is strengthened by the character Fancy, whose name, it is true, can be read in many ways. As a noun, it can be synonymous with 'creative power' as well as 'transient attraction'.

The character Fancy, thus understood in relation to her name, is associated with the idea of the creative power, linking her also to the powers of desire and transience, accordingly illustrating the effect of these in the narrative, through the effect she is shown to have on her surroundings at a plot level. From the very beginning Fancy is likened to a goddess and a work of art by the men who see her at her window, with her luminous, featureless face with "[a] twining profusion of marvelously rich hair, in a wild disorder" (55), like an image of the sun, as it is later described at sunset, "as a nebulous blaze of amber light […] an outline being lost in cloudy masses hang-

[72] Suzanne Keen, *Thomas Hardy's Brains: Psychology, Neurology and Hardy's Imagination* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2014) 70. Suzanne Keen interprets Hardy's distinctive tendency to 'flatten' and 'empty out' some of his character descriptions as representing what occurs, as Keen writes, "in other people's vision of the person".

ing round it like wild locks of hair" (88). The portrayal of Fancy viewed from outside her window, like a framed painting admired by its viewers, is arguably a self-mirroring instance in the narrative, metaphorically displaying itself as artefact. Hence, the viewers observe Fancy's appearance as she approaches the pulled down blind of her window as "an increasing light […] Remaining steady for an instant, the blind went upward from before it, revealing to thirty concentrated eyes a young girl framed as a picture by the window architrave, and unconsciously illuminating her countenance to a vivid brightness by a candle she held in her left hand, close to her […] She was wrapped in a white robe of some kind, whilst down her shoulders fell a twining profusion of marvelously rich hair, in a wild disorder" (55).

Associated with a work of art by her admiring viewers describing her as "rale waxwork", "a spiritual vision" (55), and, moreover, likening her to a "goddess" (78) in this self-reflective passage, Fancy appears a perfect embodiment of the creative power in the narrative. For, above all, as has been noted, Fancy is portrayed to encourage associations with the properties of the sun, the "God-created flame", which in Aristotle's *Poetics,* as observed by Derrida,[73] is a metaphor of what has no 'proper name' since it can never be looked at directly without turning blind, thus forming a perfect image of the elusive creative force (*Margins* 1982, 243). Besides, with Fancy being a woman, the implicit association of her with the sun, as a metaphor for the creative power, suggests the idea of the sun as feminine. In like manner, understood as self-reflective, the window scene evokes the signifiance of Hardy's ideal in art, that a work of art should convey "the spirit of things" (Björk *Notebooks* 1985, Vol. 2, 117), as his writing in this passage of *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) is shown to do.

As we shall see, Fancy is later to come across as a disruptive force at various points in the narrative. For example, under her spell, Dick, like one possessed, becomes despondent and yearns for a state of ineffable joy. A key passage, illustrative of Fancy as representing a disruptive, transformative force, takes place in a church, the very epitome of Paternal Rule and prohibition (Kristeva *Revolution*, 1984, 80), where Fancy is responsible for what, "had never happened before within the memory of man" (*Greenwood* 1872, 65), namely a sudden upsurge of the singing in the female aisle. Understood as an impersonation of the feminine creative impulse, Fancy thus represents its disruptive effect, as the turmoil she causes is likened to the surge of an unruly wave, unsettling and revolutionizing the established order of the Law of the Father.

[73] Jacques Derrida, *On the Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), 242-3, 250-1.

Appropriately, in the same novel, though in another passage, the episode of the bee-hive, disturbed in the dark by the light of the lantern of the honey collectors (*Greenwood* 1872, 160), is suggestive of signifiance when set against the idea of Fancy as an image of the creative impulse thus associated with the feminine and light; thus, associating the effect of the light on the bee-hive community with Fancy's effect on her community and in extension, therefore, with the feminine creative impulse on society, the bee-hive passage metaphorically evokes the idea of the feminine creative as potentially disruptive and as an impetus to revolution (Björk *Psychological Vision* 1987, 74). In view of such a palimpsestic reading of free association of Hardy's narrative, the scene where Fancy replaces the all-male choir signifies a revolutionizing of society from one Paternal order to another, with its consequential redefinition of the role of woman. With Fancy being from a modest, rural background, yet highly educated and trained for a superior position in life to be acquired through marriage, she epitomizes the transition from an agricultural to an industrial society, with the concomitant transformation of the role of woman from having a subservient use-value to having an elevated ornament-value, referred to by Kristeva as "femme fétiche" (Kristeva *Révolution* 1974, 451-461; Mill *On Liberty* 1975, 456-479)[74].. As a teacher, Fancy certainly exemplifies woman's position in the social order of subservient use-value, for she is practically owned by her employer, the Vicar, whose right it is to demand that she live in accordance with the rules of respectability and more generally, in compliance with the Law of the Father. As we have seen, Kristeva maintains that patriarchal cultures censor the feminine force in language through various fetishistic processes, depending on the social system. For example, in capitalism the feminine is reduced to the image of woman as a "femme fétiche", to the exclusion of all that pertains to the maternal. In this manner, Kristeva argues, patriarchy maintains its power over and against the truth of nature. Hence, the natural order is reversed through the power of language, which defines woman as serving the social system in accordance with the Law of the Father. In capitalism woman is accordingly defined in order to profit the system of industrial production. Motherhood and wifehood are thus repressed as the truly feminine is deviated to serve the system through the process of the sublimation of desire. Thus explained, capitalism maintains its power through the sublimation of desire in language (Kristeva *Révolution* 1974, 451-461).

[74] John Kucich, *The Power of Lies: Transgression in Victorian Fiction* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994) 204. As Kucich observes, "Hardy was also intensely aware of the way constructions of gender difference must be read as effects of social power, an awareness that has been recognized by Margaret Higonnet in the introduction to *The Sense of Sex. Feminist Perspectives on Hardy*. Ed. Margaret Higonnet (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993) 4.

Dressed to look like a beauty, therefore, Fancy's physical appearance behind the organ is evidently more important than her playing (*Greenwood* 1872, 179). As we have seen, Fancy is indeed shown as the agent revolutionizing the old order by disrupting its frame of norms. The new social order is but a reorganization of the old, however, equally preclusive of the creative impulse and the feminine; it is but another form of patriarchal rule (Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 109).[75] Clearly, the passage here also exhibits a self-reflective instance in the narrative, revealing the workings of the disruptive semiotic as a creative process pertaining to the feminine, as it is imagined through the figure of Fancy. As Kristeva writes: "The text is a practice that could be compared to political revolution: the one brings about in the subject what the other introduces into Society" (*Revolution* 1984, 17).

In the same manner, when Cytherea is first presented in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), she is described as an object of aesthetic admiration; her physical appearance, that is, is described to evoke ideas pertaining to art and artistic experience. Interpreted at a meta-narrative level, as we shall see, an intertextual link in this passage strengthens the idea of Cytherea as a metaphor suggestive of the connection between the creative power and the feminine. Thus, as is observed of Cytherea in the narrative: "But to attempt to gain a view of her – or indeed of any fascinating woman – from a measured category, is as difficult as to appreciate the effect of a landscape by exploring it at night with a lantern – or a full chord of music by piping the notes in succession" (6). Setting the commentary on Cytherea in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) against a commentary in Hardy's personal notes, where he complains about the unfairness of literary critics when assessing works of literature, there is a striking analogy between them. Hardy hence complains about the literary critics in his personal notes "as if it were a cultivated habit in them to scrutinize the tool marks and be blind to the building, to hearken the key-creaks and be deaf to the diapason, to judge the landscape by a nocturnal exploration with a flash-lantern" (Orel 1966, 56).[76] The similarity between the two passages, between their ideas and their similes is striking, so much so that Hardy's personal note appears to be transposed into the passage of his novel, investing it with an intertextuality whose signifiance evokes the idea of Cytherea as a metaphor, suggestive of notions on art and artistic experience. Moreover, the intertextuality of the passage exhibits a

[75] Fancy here represents what Kristeva refers to as "that liquefying and dissolving agent that does not destroy but rather reactivates new organizations and in that sense affirms". Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language.* Trans. Margaret Waller. Ed. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984) 109.

[76] Perhaps as opposed to the theory of a "transcendental aesthetic of Immanuel Kant", *Critique of Pure Reason.* Trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1964) 65-91, 244, 266, 4.

self-reflective instance in the novel, conjuring up notions appertaining to the appreciation of works of art, or, more precisely, of works of literature. For, likened to any fascinating woman, the portrayal of Cytherea suggests the idea of the Romantic Sublime; she apparently fascinates because of an inexpressible something which exceeds any "measured category". In the light of its inter-text, therefore, as here argued, the narrative is also transfused with the sense that the surplus beyond description in a work of art is the mark of artistic quality; a work of art or literature which escapes all categorization, that is, engenders the effect of fascination comparable to the inexpressible experience of the infinite of the Romantic Sublime. Hence, the narrative intertextuality of the passage in the novel produces an association of ideas relating the creative power, which reveals itself through the inexpressible quality of a work of art, to the ineffable feminine force within the paternal symbolic realm, under the Law of the Father.

By the same token, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), the idea of Tess is implicitly associated with a work of art when she is transformed by her mother into an object of admiration for her first encounter with Alec. This being the result of Tess's giving in to her mother's wishes and creativity makes it all the more interesting in this context, as it generates effects of signifiance. In this manner, that is, the portrayal of Tess in the hands of her mother, who transforms her into an object of admiration, calls forth the idea of the creative process as derivative of the feminine maternal. Additionally, however, with Tess evidently being prepared here to become an integral part of the paternal realm in the image of woman as a 'femme fétiche', the narrative is nevertheless suggestive of the paternal process of abjection, canalizing the potentially disruptive feminine to serve the system through its sublimation into the Symbolic order.

Interpreted at a character level, however, the depiction of Tess being dressed to her advantage by her mother exhibits her potentially rebellious artistic disposition, with her refusal to give in to living in accordance with the paternal social norms by marrying merely to secure her social position in life. As Margaret Higonnet observes in her "Introduction" (1998) to *Tess* (1891), Tess "rejects the trite social solution to her story, just as Hardy in his essay 'Candour in English Fiction' rejects the 'regulatory finish' that 'they married and were happy ever after'" (xxxiv). Detecting an embedded fairy-tale in the narrative, however, Margaret Higonnet interprets Tess as "surrender[ing] to emotional blackmail and commodification by her […] parents [as she is cast] in the role of [the] classic fairy-tale heroine [Grimm's Miller's daughter]" (xxxiv). Nevertheless, arguing for the idea that Hardy, perhaps unconsciously, wishes to warn his readers, as Higonnet puts it, "[of the] power of fairy-tale plots to shape people's dreams" (xxxiv), she observes

that contrary to Grimm's miraculous fairy tale happy ending of redemption, Tess is to learn that the rule for chastity is "once lost always lost" (xxxiv).

In *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), once again viewed in the context of theories of art and creativity, Fancy's disruption of Dick's inner peace presents a view of love very much in line with that of Plato in *The Phaedrus* (1973, 50-57), where it is likened to an artistic experience. In other words, comparing the experience of love or infatuation with an artist's state of inspiration, Plato describes it in terms of a divine possession, a mystic vision, revelatory of the realm of the gods, from which man was believed to derive (50-7). Such a divine possession or mystic vision, creating the insight of living in an imperfect realm of shadows, is essentially disruptive in its effect of awakening desire for the lost, paradisal, original sense of plenitude. Aristotle and Plato's discourses have left a noticeably strong impression on Hardy insofar as they seem to have been transposed into the narrative of his novels, although arguably such a transposition of discourses need not have been the result of conscious effort. In fact, in terms of Kristeva's theory it is rather a sign of the workings of the unconscious in the author, who, when writing in a state of creative sublimation, translates a flash of maternal jouissance into his text. Or, as a Lacanian view would have it, the pictorial imagery in Hardy's narrative described above exhibits an articulation of desire revelatory of a "lack of being" in the author, propelling him towards a creative sublimation in writing.

The apparition of Fancy at her window[77], referred to as the Vision (*Greenwood* 1872, 61, 63), hence appears an iconic projection of Dick's experience of the creative spirit, the imaginative reason[78] giving him an insight into reality as an unreliable world of illusion, as a mere shadow of the indefinable

[77] Suzanne Keen, *Thomas Hardy's Brains. Psychology, Neurology and Hardy's Narrative* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2014) 70. Noting Hardy's predilection for depicting figures glimpsed in windows, or, as Keen writes, "observed by passers-by", she describes this as "Hardy's pervasive imagery", interpreting it as "his plot device of private miscommunication" signifying that "the Hardy protagonist, no matter how obscure, can never entirely escape the tribe", or in other words, social sanction.

[78] Plato, *Phaedrus and Letters VII and VIII.* Trans. Walter Hamilton (London: Penguin, 1973) 50-61. Percy Bysshe Shelley, *A Defense of Poetry and Other Essays.* Ed. Albert S. Cook. (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1891) https://archive.org/stream/defenseofpoetry00sheliala/defenseofpoetry00sheliala_djvu.txt (retrieved July 2, 2020).

truth behind the veil[79]. As it is described, therefore: "He looked at the daylight shadows of a yellow hue, dancing with the firelight shadows in blue on the whitewashed chimney corner, but there was nothing in shadows" (61). Having become disconsolate with life on thus realizing its illusory nature through the Vision, Dick, lacking access to the truth that he senses behind the veil of appearances, and like an artist in this regard, is henceforth to yearn for the realm of the Ideal: "Dick wondered how it was that when people married they could be so blind to romance; and was quite certain that if he ever took to wife that dear impossible Fancy, he would never be so dreadfully practical and undemonstrative of the Passion as his father and mother were. The most extraordinary thing was that all the fathers and mothers he knew were just as undemonstrative as his own" (82). In this regard, given that the novel is generally categorized as a 'pastoral romance', however, it here foreshadows Hardy's distinctive negative portrayal of marriage as a feature more integral to the plot, although this is uncharacteristic of this genre. Indeed, as observed by Margaret Elvy in *Sexing Hardy* (2007): "In Hardy's fiction tragedies often begin with marriage as opposed to 'pastoral'/'romance' novels" (61). As Elvy further remarks, Hardy's fiction seems to convey the notion that "Love exists in a nostalgic past or in a never-to-be-attained future" (62).

In *Desperate Remedies* (1871) there is a similar window scene to the one highlighted above, where a character appears like a framed painting to be admired by a viewer. Understood as a self-reflective narrative instance, visualizing a conception of art while pointing to itself as artefact, that is, the window scene in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) exhibits a flash of feminine luminescence breaking through the veil of darkness; the darkness here is interpretable as the darkness of the paternal realm obeying the Law of the Name of the Father. Furthermore, therefore, in Kristeva's terms the narrative is suggestive of the sense of "the flow of jouissance into language" which nourishes it. (*Revolution* 81, Chanter *Picture of Abjection* 2008, 103), Thus, when viewed in the light of Lacan's theory, the narrative is revelatory of its

[79] See Plato *The Republic.* Trans. Francis Macdonald Cornford (London: Oxford UP, 1972) 83-93, 29, 36-7 for Plato's ideas on the apparition of the Forms, and the cave allegory. Shelley's notion of the veil is in *A Defense of Poetry* 12, *29, 36-7.* As Shelley writes: "Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world".
Carl Gustav Jung, *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (New York: Routledge, 1991) 256, 171, 7. The concept of the veil is originally an oriental concept referring to the veil of Maya of Tibetan Buddhism. The veil hinders access to the "universal totality of the divine state". Buddhism, Hinduism and Platonism formulate what is in fact psychic; they express the archetype of the constitutive split between man's unconscious and the conscious. Psychology is the youngest of the empirical sciences, as Jung writes, "because we had a religious formula for everything psychic". Jung notices the continuity of ideas from East to West.

state of ex-sistence, exhibiting the trace of the jouissing substance which produces "Other than meaning effects" (Lacan quoted by Fink 1997, 119).

Accordingly, the above-mentioned passage describes Edward and Cytherea on their return from an outing to Lulwind Cove, when Edward is devastated, pulled down by the sense of loss when Cytherea has gone home, and all the more so because of the abruptness of her departure and her hinting that they might never meet again:

> The young man softly followed her, stood opposite the house and watched her come into the upper room with the light. Presently his gaze was cut short by her approaching the window and pulling down the blind – Edward dwelling upon her vanishing figure with a hopeless sense of loss akin to that which Adam is said by logicians to have felt when he first saw the sun set, and thought, in his inexperience, that it would return no more. He waited till her shadow had twice crossed the window. When finding the charming outline was not to be expected again, he left. (*Desperate* 1871, 24)

As it is depicted, like other such window passages distinctive of Hardy's novels, the account of Edward's experience at Cytherea's window is resonant of the Platonist romantic idea of a poet's state of inspiration as described by Shelley; it is suggestive of Edward undergoing a momentary flash of a Vision, giving him a glimpse of the realm of the Ideal. In other words, the idea of Edward experiencing the inspirational state of a poet transfuses the narrative by way of an iconic projection of his flash of insight into the hidden meaning of life in the text. Edward's experience is thus figuratively associated with the visionary state of a visitation of the imaginative reason, offering the flash of a memory of the lost paradise of Infinite Truth and Beauty which poets yearn for. Interpreted at a meta- or mater-narrative level in the light of Kristeva and Lacan's theories, the apparent trace of Hardy's reading of Shelley's *A Defense of Poetry* in this passage betrays the return of the repressed semiotic at its source; it reveals its nourishing source of disruptive maternal jouissance, which, in excess of the Symbolic order, gives rise to the ambiguity of meaning of signifiance, making the narrative multidimensional.

The depiction of Cytherea pulling down the blind, whereby her image in the window is reduced to a shadow, is thus suggestive of the sense of Edward's sudden insight of living in a realm of shadows. In other words, the pulled down blind, which prevents a full view of Cytherea,, is evocative of the Platonist Romantic idea of the veil which separates the real and the Ideal, hindering a complete understanding of the Truth.

When Edward is associated with Adam in this passage, the reading argued for above is further strengthened. For, in alluding to the creation myth

of Original sin, the narrative calls forth the idea of earthly imperfection as a consequence of the exclusion from Paradise; in other words, suggestive of irretrievable, original loss, this passage of the novel is transfused with the sense of unfulfilled, prohibited desire. Interpreted in this manner, Edward's "hopeless sense of loss" translates into revealing the idea of his poet's personality, yearning for the lost realm of perfection glimpsed in a vision behind the veil of reality. Edward's poet's feeling of irretrievable loss is thus conveyed to enhance his desire for what he has lost. The biblical narrative of Adam's despair when he believes he is never to witness a sunset again thus transfuses the portrayal of Edward's state of despondency with the loss of his vision, producing an association of ideas between their experiences. Transposed into the novel, that is, the biblical narrative of Adam transmits its implications of hope to the portrayal of Edward's despair. In a multidimensional perspective, the narrative conveys the idea that, like Adam, who believes he will never experience a sunset again, Edward is in despair because of his lack of knowledge; like Adam, who does not know that the sun will set again, Edward does not know that, being a poet, he will be able to glimpse the realm of his vision many times over, through the creative imagination.

Thus, in the manner of the previously exemplified lighted window passage in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), this highly pictorial, dream-like portrayal of a feminine silhouette appearing in the darkness like a figure of light in the window scene in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) inspires an association of ideas between the feminine and light. Once again, comparable to the depiction of the all-male choir in the afore-mentioned window scene in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), Edward, in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), is presented as part of the surrounding darkness, thus encouraging an association of ideas connecting darkness with the masculine; by extension, therefore, the passage can be interpreted as associating darkness with the paternal Symbolic order; it can be understood, that is, as associating darkness with the social order which articulates the Law of the Name of the Father. Moreover, Edward immersed in darkness is in a state of lack of being, yearning for the source of light he has just glimpsed. As we have seen, light is figuratively evoked in this scene to convey the idea of the feminine as associated with the inspired state of a Poet, so that with the additional reference made to the in-between state of sunset, the lighted window scene in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), like the one in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), metaphorically conveys the sense of the source of the creative force as being feminine.

In the perspective of Kristeva's theory, the narrative thus exhibits disruptive semiotic jouissance in artistic practice (*Soleil* 1987, 163), as it depicts a poet's experience through Edward, who, as argued all along, is not wholly

integrated within the paternal Symbolic order, whose structure is nurtured by the abjection of maternal jouissance[80]. In a Lacanian understanding, the passage iconizes the yearning for the Imaginary Other, for "the phantasmatic partner" who will give "a sense of being", or that "phantasmatic sense of wholeness" of Other/ feminine jouissance, beyond the limits of the phallic function (Fink 1997, 60-61).

As we have seen, Edward is manifestly portrayed as being prone to ecstatic moments distinctive of an artistic personality. Interestingly, in another passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), Edward is described from Cytherea's point of view. Inspiring an interpretation at a meta-narrative level, therefore, Edward appears to function in this passage as an iconic projection imparting the experience of an inspired state and its source at the same time. With both Edward and Cytherea being creatively inclined, as previously argued, they are propelled towards each other by their shared, tacit understanding of life. In other words, the two characters can both be seen to convey the sense of both the source and force of creativity and of its effect in the narrative. In the above passages, analyzed in terms of the iconicity of the portrayal of the couple in the text, the focus has been put on Cytherea's effect on Edward. In the following passage, however, it is the depiction of Edward's effect on Cytherea which transfuses a sense of it as associated with the creative force. The passage describes Cytherea's encounter with Edward before his departure from Budmouth:

> Hastily dressing herself she went out, when the farce of an accidental meeting was repeated. Edward came upon her in the street at this turning, and like the Great Duke Ferdinand in "The Statue and the Bust"
>
> He looked at her as a lover can:
>
> She looked at him as one who awakes –
>
> The past was a sleep, and her life began. (31)

In the above quoted passage, the phrase "the farce of an accidental meeting", in addition to the quotation from the Browning poem[81], gives the impression of a self-consciously artificial narrative expressly calling attention to itself as a fictional construct. Blatantly displaying the literary conventions on which it feeds, that is, the text gives itself away as being merely a

[80] On Kristeva and Lacan's theories, see https://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/psychoanalysis/kristevaabject.html (retrieved May 1, 2016).

[81] Robert Browning, "The Statue and the Bust*"* (Boston: Nabu Press, 1915). It is a poem about the evanescence of life set against the permanence of art. https://archive.org/stream/statuebustofbrow00cumm/statuebustofbrow00cumm_djvu.txt (retrieved September 12, 2020).

part of a literary text. The quotation from the Browning poem thus reinforces the sense of contrived artificiality, almost like a mockery of the phrase "the farce of an accidental meeting" which precedes it, suggesting the thought that such meetings only occur in fiction. Moreover, the Browning poem embedded in the narrative points to an underlying theme of art and artistic practice as disrupting the signifying process, resonating from within the text with the main-theme love story of the novel. By virtue of the textual significance, therefore, the couple's desire appears an impossible love; the textually embedded theme of Browning's poem, that is, transfuses the narrative with the sense of Cytherea and Edward's desire as truly that of a yearning for the unattainable realm of the Ideal, Truth and Beauty. Interpreted in the light of Lacan's psychoanalytical theory, therefore, imbued with Hardy's desire for the Real Other of feminine jouissance as a result of his creative sublimation when writing, the narrative thus unveils the truth of prohibited desire, which makes the sexual relationship impossible.

As we have noticed, however, Cytherea's viewpoint is emphasized in this passage, as it is her experience of Edward as a life-giving force which the Browning poem describes. For Cytherea, Edward thus represents an awakening experience; portrayed as a source of life, that is, Edward is shown to exhibit the effects of a Muse on Cytherea, as he is portrayed in a way which suggests an awakening of the inspirational force of the creative imagination within her. We know Kristeva holds the view that frustration of desire is an agent of idealization, whereby desire is further enhanced (Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 435, *Soleil* 1987, 111). Interestingly, as we have seen, Hillis Miller, in his study *Thomas Hardy. Distance and Desire* (1970), has already pointed out that the frustration of desire as an agent of idealization further enhancing desire is a typical motif in Hardy's fiction. More in line with this recurrent motif of distance enhancing desire in Hardy's novels, however, is Kristeva's premise that there are "some natures" who are more prone to this idealizing tendency in its extreme form. As expressed at one point by the narrative voice in *Desperate Remedies* (1871): "With all, beautiful things become more dear as they elude pursuit, but with some natures utter elusion is the one special event which will make a passing love permanent forever" (3). Encouraging associations with the Platonist Romantic idea of the workings of a Poet's creative spirit making itself felt as a yearning for the 'paradise lost' of the realm of the Ideal, this propensity of "some natures" comes across as a sign of their creative bent. Transposed into Kristeva's discourse, therefore, such an idealizing tendency is, as we know, at the root of an artistic disposition, resulting from a mother identification during the thetic phase, when the desire for the mother is sublimated into the paternal Symbolic order. With "some natures" the frustrated desire for the mother en-

hances that desire instead, giving rise to an idealization of the lost maternal space, which further strengthens the yearning for what in the end turns out to be but an idealized fantasy (Kristeva *Histoires* 1987, 443). Conforming to the pattern of the Hardy protagonists, therefore, Cytherea's yearning for Edward when she has parted from him, following their little boat trip, is suggestive of this state of enhanced desire of "some natures"; as here argued, it has the qualities of an experience distinctive of an artistic personality:

> Then she glided pensively along the pavement behind him, forgetting herself to marble like Melancholy herself as she mused in his neighbourhood unseen. She heard, without heeding, the notes of pianos and singing voices from fashionable houses at her back, from the open windows of which the lamp-light streamed to join that of the orange-hued full moon, newly risen over the Bay. (*Desperate* 1871, 39)

With its echoes of Milton's *Il Pensoroso,* the narrative not only draws attention to itself as an artefact by a mise-en-abyme, but additionally, as we shall see, the inter-textual link relates to notions of creativity and artistic experience. As Kristeva points out in *Black Sun* (1987), the mental condition of depression, referred to by the ancient Greeks as 'melaine kole', or black bile in English, was recuperated from the field of pathology during the Classical era, when it came to be regarded as the mark of extraordinary creative faculties characteristic of the philosopher, poet or artist. Identified with experiences of insight into the hidden truth of life, therefore, the more positive conception of melancholia first appeared in the work attributed by many scholars to Aristotle, *The Problemata Physica* (30), (*Soleil* 1987, 13-22; *Histoires* 1983, 100).

If melancholia is still associated with the quality of creativity in our time, however, it is largely owing to the research of Freud in the field of psychoanalysis, where it is explained as resulting from mourning the loss of the maternal object and as revealing itself in various ways in the language of the subject's articulation. Resting on these assumptions of Freud's discourse is Kristeva's theory of mother identification, according to which melancholia is revelatory of the constitutive split of the thetic as a trauma, which, as previously observed, is characteristic of the rebellious or creatively inclined (*Soleil* 1987, 18-22; *Histoires* 1983, 100, 153). For subjects for whom the loss of the pre-symbolic maternal space with the imposition of the Symbolic order represents a trauma, the Law of the Name of the Father is suffered as a power of death (*Histoires* 1983, 253, 264-5, 271). At the root of melancholia, therefore, is desire associated with a sense of loss; in other words, it is the expression of a yearning for the pre-symbolic maternal, which is in fact only a memory, an absence that has become an idealized fantasy, giving rise

to the daimon of creativity (93-5). In other words, it is desire for the fantasy of the prohibited pre-symbolic maternal space; it is desire for the lost object of love, which pushes beyond the phallic Symbolic toward disruptive or creative activity. Hence, the rebellious, creative personality tends toward self-liberation through a sublimation of repressed desire in defiance of the prohibition of the Law of the Father. A work of art thus becomes an 'ersatz' for the lost object of desire, created through the sublimation of prohibited desire; a work of art is therefore revelatory of the pre-symbolic in a reaction against the Symbolic self (114, 168, 266, 273). As Margaret Elvy remarks in *Sexing Hardy* (2007): "Melancholy is indeed the natural state of many poets and writers […] metaphor becomes the point at which ideal and affect come together in language" (73).

Accordingly, in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) the portrayal of Cytherea left yearning for Edward is suggestive of the sense of desire for an absence, as described above; it is revelatory of desire for the object of love, which has become an idealized memory, implicitly imparting the idea of a relationship which can never come to be; in other words, it inspires the idea of the impossible sexual relationship as explicated by Lacan. When viewed in the context of the psychoanalytic discourses of Kristeva and Lacan, therefore, Cytherea, as described in this passage, appears as an iconic projection of the idea of an artistic sensibility, conveying the condition of mother identification as a yearning for the lost object of love beyond the phallic function. As we have previously noted, the connotative quality of a narrative, its signifiance, is revelatory of the process of sublimation of the pre-symbolic maternal jouissance which formed it; it is suggestive of the symbolic self of the author, torn open when writing, by prohibited desire, in opposition against the phallic Symbolic while at the same time working within it (Kristeva *Soleil* 1987, 19-20). As Margaret Elvy expresses it in *Sexing Hardy* (2007): "Thomas Hardy's notion of love, as expressed in his fiction, is so firmly bound up with notions of art and artifice […]. For Hardy […] love and art are inseparable" (72).

The detailed portrayal of the scenery in this passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), featuring numerous symbols of creativity and artistic production, is therefore suggestive of a sense beyond its surface meaning. The full moon, the references to a flow of music and streams of light, to poetry and sculpture, in addition to the allusions noted above, all contribute to the overall impression of a self-conscious text, having to do with creativity and an artist's insight into life. The portrayal of Cytherea in this setting of predominant darkness, therefore, is suggestive of her artist's insight of living in a world of shadows, where the lamp-lit contours of houses form objective correlatives of her sense

of imprisonment[82], with the light and music streaming from their open windows exhibiting her surplus of jouissance as a yearning for the inner state of creative sublimation; for the light flowing from within the dark contours of the houses is shown to join that of the newly risen full moon.

Cytherea, described as "forgetting herself to marble like Melancholy herself", further calls forth an association of ideas related to art and creativity in that the portrayal implicitly likens her to a sculpture. However, with marble customarily being used for gravestones, the reference to it in the narrative also conveys the sense of death. Interpreted at a meta-narrative level, therefore, the portrayal of Cytherea as "marble like" appears to function as an iconic projection of an artist's experience of life as a form of death. As we have seen mother-identification explicated by Kristeva, it implies that the artist's insertion into the Symbolic order is experienced as a form of death. Interpreted in the light of Kristeva's theory, the depiction of Cytherea imbued with the sense of life experienced as death can thus be held to translate Thomas Hardy's own "incommunicable grief" for the partial loss of the maternal within the Symbolic order, which permeates his writing; hence, the narrative is transfused with the sense of the experience of life as a form of death. Even so, notwithstanding the general textual negativity evoking the sense of loss, dejection and death, "its heterogeneity"[83] is suggestive of the positive signs of solace. As Kristeva explicates it, creative activity, instigated by a denial of the symbolic murder of the pre-symbolic self during the thetic separation phase, gives the mother-identifying subject release from experiencing life as a form of death (*Histoires* 1983, 271, 273). Through creative activity the death of the pre-symbolic is resurrected and repressed maternal jouissance is re-experienced, as it is sublimated, in defiance of the Law of the Name of the Father, in a work of art. In other words, a work of art is produced in sublimation of death, being that of the artist's pre-symbolic self, in death, which the Symbolic order represents for the artist. Creative activity thus represents a disruptive force, in opposition to the realm of phallic prohibition, while at the same time working within it to suggest an apology for transgression (*Soleil* 1987*,* 19-20).

As we have seen, according to Kristeva, the creative impulse is in fact disruptive maternal jouissance propelling the artist towards its sublimation in creative activity as a means of catharsis, or purgation. While the creative act provides catharsis for the artist, the work of art imbued with the trace of paternal abjection of the pre-symbolic maternal has a cathartic effect on its enjoyer. Clearly, the inexpressible something which surpasses "any

[82] Reflecting the idea of the body as the home/house and even prison-house of the soul, as expressed by Plato in *Phaedrus*.
[83] As referred to by Margaret Higonnet in her "Introduction" to the Oxford 5th edition of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (London: Penguin, 1998).

measured category" in a drawing, painting, sculpture or work of literature, the inexplicable which fascinates and provides catharsis notwithstanding its defects, is a mark of quality.

In yet another passage appearing like a framed painting in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), Cytherea is portrayed looking out of the Town Hall window in a trance-like state, previously referred to in this project as an "impassioned contemplation". Consistent with the framed painting passages analyzed in the above, this passage is covertly self-reflective, signifying disruptive, semiotic jouissance working within it; therefore, in the manner previously argued, the passage is highly connotative.

Accordingly, it is interesting that the men viewed by Cytherea are working on top of a church spire, the very epitome of patriarchy under the Law of the Name of the Father. D.H Lawrence characterized Hardy as having an artist's predilection for life lived as an emotion.[84] Clearly Lawrence saw the artist in Hardy, noticing, in his fiction, as argued in this project, a sympathy for the characters he presented as rebellious outcasts in society. Interestingly, the spire scene, in which the men "appeared little larger than pigeons", is suggestive of an artist's insight into life, conjuring the sense of a yearning, a nostalgia for the memory of a lost unrestricted freedom beyond the boundaries of the Law of the Name of the Father; interpreted at a meta-narrative level, the portrayal of the men on top of the spire, appearing "little larger than pigeons", takes the shape of an iconic projection of the view of man as reduced by the norms, rules and values of patriarchal society, of which Christianity is the pivot. Thus the passage reads:

> The height of the spire was about one hundred and twenty feet, and the five men engaged thereon seemed entirely removed from the sphere and experiences of ordinary human beings. They appeared little larger than pigeons, and made their tiny movements with a soft, spirit-like silentness. One idea above all others was conveyed to the mind of a person on the ground by their aspect, namely, concentration of purpose; that they were indifferent to – even unconscious of – the distracted world beneath them, and all that moved upon it. They never looked off the scaffolding. (*Desperate* 1871, 7)

As previously observed, the view of man reduced by the Church as a pivotal power of patriarchy is formulated in a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985): "Man manufactured artificial morality, made sins of things that were clean in themselves […] crushed nature, robbed it of its beauty & meaning, & established a system that means war […] because it

[84] See K.K. Sharma, *The Litterateur as Art-Theorist: Some Approaches to Art* (New-Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2003).

is a struggle between the instinctive truths and cultivated lies" (Vol. 2, 61). As expressed in yet another quotation: "This civilization is a dingy, ungentlemanly business; it drops out too much of man […] the beauty of the poor beast" (153).

The spire scene can thus be understood as suggestive of the notion that, on being uplifted and supported by the moral authority of patriarchal rule under the Law of the Name of the Father, man is proportionately reduced and made subservient to it.[85] In his essay "A study of Thomas Hardy" (1936), D. H Lawrence certainly reveals an affinity for Hardy in terms of his support for men and women's right to exist as individuals beyond the stereotypes of gender or class. Lawrence's view of the reduction of man by the Creed of the New Testament, as we shall see, is comparable to the idea diffused through Hardy's fiction and omnipresent in his reading, of the reduction of man by the Church. As interpreted by Lawrence, therefore, the crucifixion of Christ signifies "the sacrifice of the Son of Woman" (52-55); that is, it represents the separation of man from the body. Very much in line with the idea of abjection which permeates Hardy's novels, that is, Lawrence understands the crucifixion of Christ on which the Creed is based as being symbolic of the sacrifice of the feminine: "The body of Christ must be destroyed, that of Him which was Woman must be put to death:, to testify that He was Spirit, that He was Male, that he was Man, without any womanly part" (52-55). Considering that the "Male principle" is of Spirit within the realm of ideas and abstraction, Lawrence claimed that Christianity, as it was represented by the Church, stood for an assertion of the Male by suppressing the "Female principle". Supporting the view of the "Female principle" as the very source of life, therefore, Lawrence expressed disapproval of the Church, whose Creed he maintained justified the sacrifice of a vital part of Man.

Hence, in the spire scene in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) referred to above, Cytherea appears lost in a state of "impassioned contemplation", observing, as if she is taking in a painting, the minute men working on the church spire. As previously mentioned, the description of the scene conveys the sense of Cytherea's experience of an artist's Vision, giving her an insight into life. This insight transfuses the narrative by way of an iconic projection of the Heraclitean view of the eternal flux of things which, as we have seen from Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), evidently had a great appeal for Hardy. In other words, understood as communicating the Heraclitean view that all things are changing while remaining essentially the same in life, when interpreted at a meta-narrative level, the spire scene is transfused with the sense of the subject as a subject in process, as a "visible semblance" in

[85] For further references to Hardy's views on this, see Michael Millgate, *Life and Work of Thomas Hardy* (London: Macmillan, 1984) 101, 107, 153, 222, 333, 433.

movement, ever changing and coming to be within the Symbolic order. As we have previously noted, Hardy was well read in theories of the psyche and the human mind, seeking to explore the mysterious driving forces of human behavior. The following quote is found in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), evidencing a view analogous to that of the subject in process, of contending forces within us, influencing our actions, beyond the control of the mind: "In man the mental force is related to the forces below it neither as the creator of them, save in a very limited way: the greatest part of the forces present in man, both structural & functional, defy the mental forces absolutely" (to this an annotation, Hardy adds: "But this may be the very relation; accounting for evil, pains & c, as the rebel forces" (Vol. 2, 109).

What Cytherea is portrayed as beholding in this passage is the "sky-backed picture" featuring her father Ambrose's fall from the spire (*Desperate* 1871, 7). Here again, the scene is narrated from a third person perspective, describing Cytherea contemplating the action as if she were gazing at a painting. As previously noticed, the contrived artificiality of the narrative creates the effect of a mise-en-abyme, mirroring its status as artefact; by thus revealing itself as a multilayered structure, the narrative encourages a widened range of interpretation. Accordingly, we learn that Cytherea's father, Ambrose, is an architect and a "dreamer" (34, 61, 64), wherefore, like his daughter, Cytherea, he can be associated with the notion of an artist. For that reason, his fall from the spire appears an iconic projection revealing how the social system ousts or casts out the too uncompromising artist. As we have seen, this idea of society's abjection of the unruly creative is later expressed by Springrove, when discussing poetry with Cytherea. Moreover, considering Hardy's negative experience of censorship, as we have previously noted, such a critical view of the artist's role in society must certainly reflect that of Hardy himself.

Interpreted in the light of Kristeva's theory, the passage can be seen to impart the sense of the marginalization of creativity, by way of an iconic projection, picturing the process of abjection of disruptive artistic excess as posing a threat to the social order under the Law of the Father (*Révolution* 1974, 166; *Pouvoirs* 1980, 22-4; Chanter *Revolt* 2005, 1-8). Interestingly, in this context, a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) is also discernible as embedded in the narrative iconicity of the passage: "Besides the prominent men of a generation there is something at work underneath" (Vol. 2, 109). The portrayal of the men at work on top of the spire, improving on or restoring it, thus evokes the idea of it as a palimpsest of the text of the quotation, illustrating the "prominent men of a generation" thus figuratively conveyed in the novel, as upheld and acknowledged by the social system they are working to reinforce. With the "distracted world beneath"

in the novel, corresponding to "something at work underneath" in the quotation, therefore, the passage in the novel is transfused with the sense of the quotation, by way of which the novel can be perceived as implicitly referring to the unrecognized contributors to the course of History, as discounted by the social system as they are neglected by the historians (Chanter *Revolt* 2005, 4-5).86 When juxtaposed with the more psychological reading exemplified above, therefore, the passage calls forth a train of thought connecting the forces at work within man with the historical forces of social change; the passage thus incites an idea association which we shall see is further strengthened by the following portrayal of Cytherea's inner world.

Anticipating imminent disaster, Cytherea is likened to "one of the ancient Tarantines, who on such an afternoon as this, watched from the Theatre the entry into the Harbour of a power that overturned the State". (7). Accordingly, taking the effects of intertextuality into consideration as argued above, the iconicity of the spire scene inspires a free association linking the process of abjection with revolution and social change in the course of history. Interpreted from a sociocultural semiotic perspective, the iconicity of the narrative further conjures the sense of yet another annotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), theorizing about human nature and social change: "Our own 'human nature', which exalted itself into an image of God in its anthropomorphic illusion sinks […] Humanity is but a transitory phase of the evolution of an external substance, a particular phenomenal form of matter and energy" (Vol. 2, 99). Accordingly, considering the annotation as a subtext that is embedded here in the narrative of the novel, the image of Ambrose's fall from the spire, understood as a palimpsest, is revelatory of the sense of the transience of humanity and of man's illusory sense of centrality. Interpreted in the terms of Kristeva's theory, the narrative is transfused with the sense of man's realization of being a "subject in process", by the sense of being a subject in transformation and dependent on the social order. The end of the 19th century is generally described as a transitional period from the reign of religion to that of science; it is further specified by psychoanalysts and psychologists as a transitional era of consequence for man's sense of identity. Ambrose's fall from the spire, as observed by Cytherea almost like a painting in the passage of the novel here discussed, can thus be understood as expressing the sense of Cytherea's experience of the flash of an artist's insight into life, with the view of humanity sinking and falling from the heights of the illusion of their centrality in life.

[86] Hillis Miller, *Thomas Hardy, Distance and Desire* (Cambridge: Massinger, 1970) 36. Miller notes that it was characteristic of the Victorian epoch to consider 'history' as it was written and taught as an interpretation, a reconstruction of events, forming a powerful determining force on the present. See further quotations on this subject in *The Literary Notebooks*. Ed. Björk (1985). Vol. 1, entry 1602 (215), Vol. 2, entry 1720 (17)..

Moreover, as we have argued in the above when analyzing the spire scene in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), the portrayal of the five men, peacefully at work on top of the spire to maintain its architectural finesse, figuratively imparts the idea of the status of art and the artist during the period of the combined rule of Church and State, when artists were appointed to the service of the sovereign of an absolute monarchy. Art was thus essentially religious, symbolically glorifying the monarch with the purpose of creating social cohesion; serving as an instrument to uphold the reigning order, the artist was ensured a position within its patronage system. As Kristeva describes it, a totalitarian government keeps the dangerously disruptive, semiotic Chora at bay by maintaining the sublimation of its creative force into the Symbolic order, in keeping with the Law of the Father. Hence an absolutism provides a cathartic outlet within the boundaries of the social system for both the artist and the consumers of art alike. Interpreted in consideration of the historical and cultural context of art, the spire passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), with its highly pictorial portrayal of Ambrose's fall, as he "reeled off into the air" from the spire, can be perceived as a figurative display of the status of art in the predominantly Protestant Industrial era with its creed of consumerism. Illustrative of the Protestant ethic and austerity as prohibitive of jouissance, the narrative can be understood to evoke the sense of how the creative artist "reeled off" the pedestal of the system whose process of abjection comprised even the sublimation of jouissance providing catharsis within the bounds of the Law of the Father and supportive of its Law (Kristeva *Soleil* 1987, 132-3). With the rise of Industrialism, as Kristeva argues, art was reduced to the role of serving the system of consumerism as a mere fetish, as merely an object of consumption, divested, that is, of its cathartic function (*Révolution* 1974, 63-64).

As demonstrated in the above, in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) the spire scene is highly connotative, offering a broad spectrum of readings, which, in terms of Kristeva's theory, is a sign of disruptive, semiotic jouissance working within it. It thus signifies Hardy's cathartic outlet in writing, investing his narrative with the jouissance which makes it iconic, multilayered and highly ambiguous; it is not only an intertextual network with an array of texts and their ideas which makes it multidimensional, therefore, it also forms a self-reflective instance illustrating Hardy's jouissance in writing, figuratively revealing him as "reeling off" the inhibiting heights of the Law of the Father, thrown off its phallic spire, for transgressing the prohibition of jouissance. For Hardy, however, the experience of "reeling off" the phallic spire in writing was evidently a cathartic release. Or, as it is expressed in a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985):

> Let's sink – and so take refuge, as it were,
>
> From life's excessive altitude, to life's
>
> Breathable wayside shelter at its base. (Vol. 2, 24)

Another poignant example of a self-reflective framed painting passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), providing catharsis in Kristeva's sense of the term, is the depiction of Cytherea's visit to the Manor House for an interview with her future employer, Miss Aldclyffe. With its features of poetic prose, the passage must evidently have been written in a state of cathartic sublimation, having left its mark in the narrative in the form of a trace. Multilayered and highly connotative, the passage is clearly invested with the disruptive, transgressive semiotic motility of prohibited maternal jouissance, which produces the effects of poetry. Accordingly, the inside of the Manor House certainly forms an objective correlative of its owner, while simultaneously, another part of the description is suggestive of the inner worlds of both Cytherea and Miss Aldcliffe, and more generally still, of the feminine under the Law of the Father.

> Cytherea was shown into a nondescript chamber on the shady side of the building, which appeared to be either bedroom or dayroom, as occasion necessitated, and was one of a suite at the end of the first-floor corridor.
>
> The prevailing colour of the walls, curtains, carpet, and coverings of the furniture, was more or less blue, to which the cold light coming from the north-easterly sky and falling on a wide roof of new slates – the only object the small window commanded – imparted a more striking paleness. But underneath the door, communicating with the next suite, gleamed an infinitesimally small, yet very powerful, fraction of contrast – a very thin line of ruddy light, showing that the sun beamed strongly into this room adjoining. The line of radiance was the only cheering thing visible in the place. […] Cytherea fixed her eyes idly upon the streak, and began picturing a wonderful paradise on the other side as the source of such a beam – reminding her of the well-known good deed in a naughty world. Whilst she watched the particles of dust floating before the brilliant chink she heard a carriage and horses stop opposite the front of the house. Afterwards came the rustle of a lady's skirts down the corridor, and into the room communicating with the one Cytherea occupied. The golden line vanished in parts like the phosphorescent streak caused by the striking of a match […]. (42)

Interestingly, in the above quoted passage the room is predominantly blue. Though the color 'blue' is generally thought to be of the Spirit (Schotteni-us 1992, 88, Kristeva *Desire* 1982, 236), for C G Jung it is the sign of the Anima in the unconscious (*Memories* 1973, 314-20), while in the light of Kristeva's theory, dark blue is associated with the archaic territory of the Mother in that it is the first color a baby can see (*Desire* 1982, 225).[87] As we have seen, therefore, shades of blue in creative art are illustrative of the creative power, of the disruptive semiotic maternal on which art feeds. Moreover, the room is immersed in sunlight, which, like the blue color, as previously noticed, conveys notions of creativity and the feminine. The light, however, is only the refracted rays of the sun, as it is written, "falling on a wide roof of new slates – the only object the small window command-ed". In other words, sunlight here, being reflected from the new slates of the roof, emblematically suggests the appropriation of the creative power of the feminine by patriarchy under the Law of the Name of the Father. With the new slates of the roof thus interpreted as an iconic projection of the rise of Industrialism, they can be seen as forming a synecdoche of the new social order of capitalism, being like the former social order determined by the paternal function of the Law of the Father. Hence, the window, specified as being small, and moreover as commanding a view of that which pertains to the symbolic of the paternal realm only, inspires a figurative reading of it as exhibiting the repressive mechanism of paternal law. Viewed in this manner, the narrative conveys the idea of the realm of the Law of the Father as a prison-house, withholding the creative feminine, preventing its free-flow, restricting it, as the sunlight is sieved by the tiny window with its limited scope. What is more, the window opens to "the north-easterly sky", with "the north", explaining the effect of "cold light", conveying a chilling negative experience, and with "easterly" signifying its source as sunrise, which, being symbolic of a threshold condition, like an iconic projection, exhibits the creative potential of the characters here involved. Figuratively imparting the thetic as it is defined by Kristeva, the narrative is transfused with the sense of paternal abjection of the maternal space, of the ineffable feminine, inexpressible within the realm of the Law of the Father, other than in creative art. Accordingly, the "cold light […] [imparting] a more striking paleness" to the blueness of the room, watering it down, when perceived as communicating the sense of the prohibitive Law of the Father, is also suggestive of Cytherea's artistic insight into her state of self-alienation within the Symbolic order. In other words, the room is a dreary, lifeless

[87] In *Desire in Language* (1982), Kristeva notes that of all the colors "[the] earliest appear to be those with short wavelengths, and therefore the colour blue" 225.

place, whose chilly and depressing ambience evidently reflects Cytherea's inner state on anticipating the demands of her future employer. As we have seen, Cytherea reacted strongly when reading the description of herself in her job application, upset because she could not recognize herself in it. In view of this, the dreary atmosphere of the room appears to be a projection of Cytherea's artistic temperament; she is dispirited by the prospect of assuming the role expected of her within the social order. In this sense, too, yet more generally, the narrative displays an iconic projection of the implications of the thetic for the mother-identifying artist. In support of such a reading, the "line of radiance" beaming from beneath the closed door to the adjoining suite, is a sign that "the sun beamed strongly into this room", where the sunlight manifests the creative force of the feminine, while the closed door, signifying exclusion, is evocative of paternal law prohibiting access to the space of maternal jouissance. Thus, "the line of radiance was the only cheering thing in the place", which seemingly transports Cytherea into a contemplative state, "picturing a wonderful paradise on the other side as the source of such a beam", as if her portraiture is here featuring the Romantic idea of a Poet, subject to a visitation of the imaginative Spirit.

The impression that the narrative is here transfused with the sense of an artistic experience, and more, specifically, with its own creative process, is accentuated by a covertly self-reflective instance, where, displaying itself as an artefact by alluding to another literary work, the narrative presents a line from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, "the well-known good deed in a naughty world". In this manner, the "line of radiance" seeping through the interstice of the closed door, being the only pleasurable aspect of this depressive enclosure for Cytherea, is suggestive of a Lacanian metaphor of the jouissing substance in language, exhibiting its trace as ex-sistence (Lacan *Encore* 1999, 119), while Cytherea's envisioning its source as "a wonderful paradise" is reminiscent of the idealizing fantasy of the pre-Oedipal as the source of creativity. Thus, the narrative here evokes the sense of desire in artistic expression in language, as defined by Kristeva, offering a glimpse of the heterogeneity of the drives of the maternal pre-conscious that erupt from within the artist, taking the form of poetic negativity in creative art.

The seemingly banal observation that Cytherea "watched the particles of dust floating before the brilliant chink", therefore, is laden with great symbolic significance. For dust is an ancient symbol of the creative force, associated with the intangible or ethereal and with the mystical view of life and death as joined in a cycle of eternal spiritual regeneration; traditionally, according to C. G. Jung, it is also a symbol of the innermost chamber of the psyche (Schottenius 1992, 244-5). In Kristeva's understanding, with dust

being a residue substance of organic decay, associated with disease, death and the body, like other forms of bodily substances it projects the sense of the abject. Moreover, dust is an all-pervasive powder; it is a substance the spreading and movement of which cannot be fully prevented or contained; it is a substance which immerses and surrounds, and which escapes all preventive bounds. As innocent flux, as eternal flow and movement, dust forms the very image of paternal abjection, indicative, within creative art, of creative cathartic sublimation; the portrayal of dust in a creative narrative, therefore, is a sign of deeper levels of meaning produced by the disruptive semiotic of the pre-Oedipal maternal[88], giving rise to textual signifiance. The portrayal of the dust particles floating in the sunlight thus transmits the signifiance of an inspirational moment, as an iconic projection of the innermost chamber of Cytherea's psyche as mother-identifying, in narcissistic yearning for the ever-lost paradise of maternal jouissance.

In *Desperate Remedies* (1871), Cytherea's meeting with her future employer, Miss Aldclyffe, however, is the more noteworthy for its parallelism with the previously observed window scene where Edward is shown to observe Cytherea. For both scenes portray the appearance of a woman, in a strongly lit framed opening of a house, as observed by another character. Undoubtedly, in this context, the parallelism of the scenes strengthens the view of them as iconic projections of the onlooker's artistic insight into the hidden truth of life as mere appearance. Yet there are significant discrepancies between the perspectives of the two portrayals. If the scene describing Edward gazing at Cytherea figuratively imparts an artist's more positive perspective on the creative daimon of the abject maternal jouissance, thus rendered as the experience of an idealized fantasy, the scene with Cytherea and Miss Aldclyffe, as we shall see, is more ambiguous in this regard. Unlike Cytherea's appearing in the window as a figure of light, whose near surreal image of beauty personified is reduced to the shadow that is cast with the pulling down of the blind, Miss Aldclyffe is described as an imposing, dark figure from the outset. Hence, Cytherea experiences Miss Aldclyffe as a dark apparition in the strong light of the doorway, bathed in blazing sunrays through crimson curtains, like a Mephistophelian figure surrounded by burning flames of fire. Indeed, the text lends support to Kristeva's claim that the position of woman in society displays itself in the field of representation; as Kristeva expresses it, and as quoted by Elvy in her study *Sexing Hardy* (2007), "The peripheral and ambivalent position allocated to woman […] has led to that familiar division of the field of representation in which women are viewed as either saintly or demonic […] bringing the darkness in, or keeping it out" (28-9).

[88] See Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror.* Trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983)

As we shall see, however, the two contrasting representations of woman as an idealized saint or as a demonic figure of darkness can also be interpreted as figuring contrasting experiences of creativity. Cytherea's first experience of Miss Aldclyffe's apparition is thus described in order to awaken negative associations with demonic forces:

> The direct blaze of the afternoon sun, partly refracted through the crimson curtains of the window, and heightened by reflections from the crimson-flock papers which covered the walls, and a carpet on the floor of the same tint, shone with a burning glow round the form of a lady standing close to Cytherea's front with the door in her hand. The stranger appeared to the maiden's eyes-fresh from the blue gloom, and assisted by an imagination fresh from nature – like a tall black figure standing in the midst of fire […]
>
> Cytherea involuntarily shaded her eyes with her hand, retreated a step or two, and then she could for the first time see Miss Aldclyffe's face in addition to her outline. […] Both women showed off themselves to advantage as they walked forward in the orange light; and each showed too in her face that she had been struck with her companion's appearance. (*Desperate* 1871, 57)

The passage is certainly highly dramatic, with its imagery connoting ideas of passion, the forces of evil, the threat of imminent disaster and even death. Though evidently an iconic projection of Miss Aldclyffe's repressed but passionate personality, when viewed as a negative of the window scene with Edward and Cytherea it is imbued with another sense. Interestingly, the two women are shown to share their first names, with the narrative thus hinting at a connection later to be clarified when Cytherea learns of Miss Aldclyffe's former love affair with Ambrose Graye. From then on, with Miss Aldclyffe being called Cytherea I, and Cytherea Graye being referred to as Cytherea II, the two women are associated in a manner connoting the idea, almost, of a mother-daughter royal lineage, suggestive of the sense of maternal power; it communicates the sense, that is, of the idealized fantasy of living under the sway of the power of the mother's body. Being a very passionate and experienced woman, Cytherea I is described as an older, disillusioned version of Cytherea II (65), whom she employs, moreover, mainly for her beauty (144-5). Like a guiding maternal figure for Cytherea II, however, Cytherea I will contribute to Cytherea II's development by widening her experience of life and improving her self-knowledge.

Again, the fact that the two women are shown as united by means of their first names produces an ambiguity revelatory of the process of signifiance. As stated in the above, Cytherea's experience of Miss Aldclyffe in the door-

way has all the components of the window scene with Edward and Cytherea. With the doorway scene figuring the two women thus understood as a palimpsest of the window scene with Edward and Cytherea, it is suggestive of the sense in the latter scene of an artist's insight into life, that existence is a world of shadows, and that the essential truth is attainable only through artistic expression. There is an ambiguity in the doorway scene which is lacking in the window scene, however. As previously mentioned, with Cytherea I, delineated from the outset as an imposing shadow figure, a "tall black figure standing in the midst of fire", her appearance is evidently portrayed as experienced by Cytherea II from her perspective of "a maiden's eyes fresh from the blue gloom" of the room she's in. The contrasting background colors of Cytherea I and II, however, become the more significant when considering the scene as a palimpsest of the earlier window scene. Although the contrasting colors evidently represent sexual maturity and experience versus sexual inexperience and innocence, understood as a palimpsest of the window scene with Edward, the doorway scene transmits the sense of the contrasting responses to paternal prohibition associated with the two women. As we have noticed, the window scene with Cytherea II is transfused with the sense of the feminine idealized, of artistic melancholy and states of idealizing desire for an inexpressible, lost paradisiacal bliss, characteristic of Kristeva's view of mother identification. Likewise, therefore, the "blue gloom" surrounding Cytherea II figuratively presents a textual reminder of her as mother-identifying; it is suggestive of her creative potential; the portrayal of Cytherea II, that is, immersed in blue when experiencing Miss Aldclyffe, inspires the view of the scene as an iconic projection of an artist's Vision or insight into life. Accordingly, as Cytherea II's future employer, Cytherea I Aldclyffe figuratively imparts the sense of paternal prohibition of the social order, experienced as a threat by Cytherea II; she is delineated, that is, as an ominous Mephistophelian figure of darkness, against a background of predominantly crimson light, as if immersed in blazing flames of fire. Forming an iconic projection of Cytherea II's experience, therefore, the background colors, imagery and general atmosphere surrounding Cytherea I are striking, in stark contrast to the backdrop of Cytherea II. Interestingly, in its traditional, Biblical sense, crimson, being the color of fire and blood, symbolizes the presence of God, through the consuming fire of the Holy Spirit, and the blood of the martyrs; more generally, therefore, crimson is a color associated with power.[89] The symbolic meaning of crimson as fire is striking in more than one sense, however, as it creates an interesting ambiguity in the narrative.

[89] Symbolism of colors in the Elizabethan era; L. K. Alchin, *Elizabethan Era*, http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/color-crimson.htm (retrieved July 8, 2020).

As noted above, the delineation of Miss Aldclyffe as Cytherea I inspires the notion of maternal power. There is also the symbolism of strong sunlight here, signifying creativity, thus illustrating its association with the maternal or, as hitherto argued, with the truly feminine. Thus, Miss Aldclyffe, being likened to Cytherea II, evidently shares her artistic disposition. Yet, described as the disillusioned original version of her copy, and, moreover, being her future employer, Cytherea I Aldclyffe is imbued with the symbolic value of the paternal realm of the social order in the narrative. Although the sunlight refracted through the crimson curtains produces the effect of flames, immersing Cytherea I like burning fire, figuratively imparting the idea of Heraclitean flux associated with the creative power, the narrative is here imbued with the sense of fire as an ominous threat.

Interpreting the doorway scene as a palimpsest of the Edward-Cytherea window scene at a meta-narrative level, however, brings to light a narrative self-consciousness which, according to Kristeva's theory, is revelatory of the dynamics of signifiance. Thus, being understood as self-reflective, like the window scene, the doorway scene betrays the generative process of the semiotic which forms it. Accordingly, perceived as revealing the process of creative catharsis, in the manner of the window scene, the doorway scene also appears an iconic projection of an artist's insight into existence as mere appearance, inspiring an association of ideas connecting the creative power with the generative power of the feminine. In the doorway scene, however, the feminine is overtly associated with the maternal; it is thus imbued with ambiguity in that the maternal feminine is here figuratively presented by way of the character Miss Aldclyffe, who, although a woman, is cast in the role of serving the social system as Cytherea's employer. The sense of the feminine maternal associated with the creative power imbuing the doorway scene is thus unveiled as it appears within the Symbolic order in the realm of the paternal, which is to say as the prohibited abject. Again, as previously observed, in the terms of Lacan's psychoanalytical semiotic theory, with Miss Aldclyffe in the doorway scene the narrative figuratively displays the state of ex-sistence within the phallic structure, in which the feminine maternal is the "not all that escapes the All" of the phallic symbolic, as Raul Moncayo expresses it in his study *Evolving Lacanian Perspectives for Clinical Psychoanalysis* (2018); the feminine escapes the All, that is, because "it is of a different nature" (94)). As Raul Moncayo further explains, "Lacan associates femininity with the lack or hole of the Symbolic and with how the Real appears within the Symbolic as the not all" (94). Forming an iconic projection of the inexpressible desire for the feminine maternal, which is prohibited within the phallic Symbolic structure that obeys and supports the Law of the Father, therefore, Miss Aldclyffe appears an ominous menacing

figure in the narrative, which inspires a sense of her being associated with the power of evil.

In *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Hardy depicts an illuminated window scene that inspires a reading similar to those of the the window and doorway scenes studied in the above. Evidently distinctive of Hardy's novels, that is, the illuminated window scene in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) here exemplified evokes associations of prohibited desire, the feminine maternal and the creative power. The passage portrays Elfride on a moonlit night, drawn by the appearance of two shadowy figures in the illuminated window, apparently having an amorous relationship behind the pulled down blind. Elfride will later learn, however, that she had been misguided by her preconceptions about Stephen's "dark secret", which she believed was that of an illicit love affair; she had therefore misunderstood the situation when she saw the two shadowy figures behind the blind, seemingly in a loving embrace (30). The passage, with its depiction of Elfride experiencing the shadow figures she witnesses in the illuminated window as immersed in a state of desire, when interpreted in the light of Kristeva and Lacan's theories, evokes the sense of prohibited desire, of hidden truth and the creative power. Even more interesting, however, it is later brought to light that the two shadowy figures whom Elfriede believed to be Stephen and a woman, embracing in passionate love, were in fact mother and son (57). Accordingly, transfused with the semiotic drives which constitute signifiance, setting the signifying process in motion, the narrative is imbued with the sense of Stephen's desire as associated with the abject prohibited desire for the maternal space. The framed window passage thus translates a self-reflective instance in the narrative, revelatory of the disruptive semiotic drives on which it is nourished; as we have seen, it unveils the "dark secret" which forms the basis for creative activity; in other words, the narrative displays the cathartic creative sublimation which formed it as a process which feeds on the prohibited desire for the maternal space.

In a framed scene in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), Tess is delineated in a manner that evokes associations with the process of abjection as we have seen it explicated by Kristeva. The framed scene appears in the passage narrating the evening of the dance at Chaseborough which is to mark Tess forever. Thus, the evening is portrayed as being almost numinous in atmosphere, with the alluring beauty of autumn light at dusk like poetry, giving rise to an experience of the sublime: "It was a fine September evening, just before *sunset*, when *yellow lights* struggle with *blue shades in hair-like lines*, and the atmosphere itself forms a prospect without aid from more solid objects, except the *innumerable winged insects* that *dance* in it. Through this low-lit mistiness Tess walked leisurely along" (my emphasis 206). Highly evocative of the creative power with its manifold signs of the

disruptive semiotic, or of the jouissing substance, in Lacan's terms, the passage is clearly self-reflective. Conveying the sense, that is, of the author's sublimation of the process of abjection of the paternal Symbolic in writing, the narrative can be understood as a self-conscious moment where, by calling attention to itself as artefact, it gives rise to associations with the art of story-telling, with fables and fairy-tales, while the portrayal of the near demonic frolic of the rustics has affinities with Shakespearian tragedy90. If the infernal aura of the rustics with their commentaries makes them reminiscent of the witches in *Macbeth* (1606), who are interpretable as having pushed Macbeth to his tragic end, the whole passage, eerily enough, also calls forth associations with the general atmosphere of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600); the ambiguity of the uncanny mix of the numinous and the infernal, however, produces expectations of tragedy rather than romantic comedy.

Accordingly, Tess figures in a narrative highly suggestive of the creative energy which nourishes it; thus, it exhibits itself as artefact by means of the description of a character taking in a framed scene of light and shadow, as we have seen other such passages of Hardy's novels do. Significantly, in this context, it is the sound which attracts Tess to the scene she is to view through the open outhouse door, as if it were a painting or a play; it seems to be the ethereal creative energy of the scene which attracts her. In a manner suggestive of the process of signifiance communicating through what Kristeva determines as j'ouis sens*,* therefore, Tess is shown to "hear the meaning" of the scene she experiences. Accordingly, this self-reflective passage appears transfused with Hardy's view of an ideal reader; that is, it can be understood implicitly to indicate that the novel is best appreciated by way of a 'hearing', by 'taking pleasure in', by 'taking in' or 'seeking to understand' the sense of the creative power transfusing the narrative, imparting its hidden meaning through the interstices of the text. Clearly, the whole passage signifies a creative cathartic moment of authorial sublimation of maternal jouissance on writing; it thus also conveys the sense of Tess here experiencing an artist's insight into life as mere appearance, for, as Tess's experience is further described, "from the open door there floated into the obscurity a mist of yellow radiance, which at first Tess thought to be illuminated smoke. But drawing nearer she perceived that it was a cloud of dust, lit by candles within the outhouse, whose beams upon the haze carried forward the outline of the doorway into the night of the garden." (107).

[90] Dennis Taylor, "From Shakespeare to Casterbridge: The influence of Shakespeare," *The Ashgate Research Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Ed, Rosemary Morgan (St. Andrews University UK: Ashgate Research Company, 2010) 124-55. Taylor studies the influence of Shakespeare on Hardy based on Hardy's annotations and underlinings in his ten-volume edition of Shakespeare as well as on the quotations in his notebook of 'Studies'. As Taylor observes: "Hardy's writing career began with a blizzard of Shakespearian influences" 124.

The scene within the frame as experienced by Tess is evidently reminiscent of the sense of maternal jouissance, with the effects of the moving shadows in candlelight stirring up dust, creating the hazy nebulosity of a dreamlike atmosphere, suggestive of a Poet's Vision of the real as a mere play of shadows. For the narrative is imbued with the sense of the apparent frolic of it all, as its signifiance communicates the sense of Tess's premonitory insight into life, revealing the hidden truth of the process of paternal abjection. Thus Tess, with her education, and what is interpreted, in her surroundings, as her air of pretension when she refuses Alec, is shown to become the embodiment of the abject for the rustics, on this evening of cathartic jouissance, which is allowed them within the controlling phallic frame of the Symbolic order, as an outlet for their potentially disruptive forces. Prey to the force of paternal abjection, the rustics thus turn against Tess, in a violent attack against her, for refusing to accept the conditions of the Law of the Father. Tess, the abject, is accordingly pushed back into place through the force of paternal abjection as the virulent attack of the rustics virtually propels her onto Alec's horse, offering her his rescue like a fairy-tale Prince. Indeed, as Margaret Higonnet notes in her "Introduction" (1998) to the novel: "Many details in the narrative awaken the ghostly trace of familiar fairy tales, mixing Christian with pagan [yet] these motifs are both rearranged and turned into grotesque inversions of conventional plots." As Higonnet specifies, however, "[s]ome echoes may not have been conscious" (xxxiii). Furthermore, Linda Shires notes Hardy's distinct multifaceted narrative method in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), in her essay "The radical aesthetic of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" (1999) in which she remarks, "it is so "richly layered and refractive [that it] challenges the unitary and anthropocentric aspirations of so many of our cultural systems" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 157). Nevertheless, on the basis of Keen's study *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014), the multifaceted narrative technique, claimed by Higonnet and Shires to distinguish the novel *Tess* from Hardy's other novels, is characteristic of Hardy's fiction in general[91]. More notably, as we have seen, Hardy's narrative technique is evidently revelatory of Hardy's primarily visual imagination[92]; as exemplified in the above, the framed illuminated window and the doorway scenes, with shadowy figures emerging from behind pulled down blinds, distinctive of Hardy's novels, are transfused with the sense of signifiance which undermines, as Shires expresses it, "the bases of mimetic representation" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 148). In other words, Hardy's highly pictorial narrative encourages fundamentally non-realistic interpretations. Un

[91] See Suzanne Keen, *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014), previously quoted in the above.
[92] See Dale Kramer, *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy.* Ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1999) 148.

derstood as "impressions" formulated or, rather, "painted" by Hardy in the words of his novels therefore, the figurative passages can be seen as expressing the so-called "abstract imaginings" of a "deeper reality", which, as Shires further reminds us, Hardy sought to convey with his prose (148). In the context of this study, however, the framed scenes in Hardy's fiction are understood as instances of narrative self-reflectivity, when the symbolic is ruptured by the semiotic jouissance, causing it to reveal the process of signifiance which undermines the possibility of any single unified meaning. As here argued, the signifying process rupturing the paternal Symbolic order in Hardy's narrative transfuses the sense of the views of Hardy's reading on creativity and on the creatively inclined.

3. Narcissistic attraction and narrative ambiguity

In her feminist study of Hardy's fiction, *Sexing Hardy: Thomas Hardy and Feminism* (2007), Margaret Elvy identifies the influence in Hardy's fiction of the Romantic poets Keats, Shelley and Wordsworth. Thus, Elvy reflects on Hardy's lovers' "Shelleyian aching for release" from their "Godless world" (60) in which, as she expresses it "the beloved has to stand in for the divinity, much as the lady of courtly love poetry was a divinity akin to the Virgin Mary" (61). Noticing the curious ambiguity in Hardy's portrayal of his lovers, with its marked influence of the Neoplatonic concept of love, Elvy defines it as "founded on interiority and autoeroticism" (72). As she explains it, "Narcissus loves himself, he is both subject and object. His real object of desire is an image of himself, that is, representation, art" (72). Reasoning along this line, therefore, Elvy identifies the signs of the process of abjection at work in the narrative, in order to explore the essentially non-sexual character of the lovers' desire. Commenting on the characters Sue, Jude and Tess, Elvy thus maintains that they are pursued for being non-sexual. According to her, therefore, "Hardy shows how society polices itself, how it constructs its sexual norms" (68). As we shall see, Elvy's focus, when studying the distinctive quality of the force of attraction propelling Hardy's lovers towards each other as essentially non-sexual (72), is very much in line with the point of view argued for in this project. In other words, as here argued, the desire of Hardy's lovers is held to be of the essentially non-sexual, auto-erotic kind of primary narcissism.

Interestingly, therefore, Elfride's force of attraction to Stephen, in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), is first revealed in a scene reminiscent of a domestic interior painting, typical of the epoch. The effect of the description of this scene is therefore one of self-conscious artificiality, where Elfride is playing the piano, admired by Stephen as if she were part of a painting; thus, calling to mind notions of art and artistic expression, Elfride is portrayed as an

"image", whose "frizzled hair like a nebulous haze of light [from the candle] surrounding her crown like an aureola" (13) inspires the idea of an angel, whose tunes evidently resonate with Stephen's inner self. Exhibiting itself as an artefact, the narrative is thus suggestive of an instance of authorial creative catharsis, whereby its signifiance metaphorically reveals the sense of a Poet's state of inspiration, awakened by the creative Spirit, giving the insight into life as mere appearance. The self-reflective narrative, that is, unveils the trace of its creative process which produces an ambiguity of meaning, making the meaning at least double. With the iconicity of the portrayal of Elfride and Stephen's burgeoning desire producing associations with art and artistic expression in the manner argued for in this project, therefore, the narrative conveys the sense of their love relationship as an impossible ideal within the realm of the Symbolic order in which they are living, obeying the Law of the Name of the Father; in the context of Lacan's psychoanalytic semiotic theory, as we have previously demonstrated for other such highly pictorial passages in Hardy's novels, the narrative is suggestive of the idea of the impossible sexual relationship.

In accordance with the above presented analyses of the expression of the state of desire in Hardy's novels, interpreted in the light of Kristeva and Lacan's theories, Edward and Cytherea in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) seem driven by a desire for the inexpressible. In the "Introduction" (1975) to *Desperate Remedies* (1871), Beatty argues that the love between Cytherea and Edward represents classical culture as a possible solution to the problems arising out of the new industrial age (xxv-vi). Beatty notes that the name Cytherea is that of the goddess of love, who delivers the god in Virgil's *Aeneid*, a work which is cited at least six times in the novel (xxv). The intertextual link with *The Aeneid* supports the idea of the narrative as self-referential; so displaying itself as artefact it conjures up notions of art and artistic production in the reader. The intertextual link between the novel and *The Aeneid* thus also affects a reading of it on a character level. Viewed in this context, it is the symbolic signifiance of Cytherea, the "goddess of love", who delivers the god in *The Aeneid*, which forms an intertextual link of relevance in *Desperate Remedies* (1871). Cytherea is then interpretable as a metaphor of the Muse[93] in Hardy's novel, the goddess who momentarily unleashes the creative daimon within the artist. For, as Beatty further observes, the bliss of the couple in Hardy's novel proves short-lived: "this ecstasy of love lasts but a few minutes" (xv). As it is described in the narrative of the novel: "How blissful it all is at first. Perhaps indeed, the only bliss in the course of love which can be called Eden-like is in that which prevails imme

[93] Julia Kristeva, *Soleil Noir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987) 198. Kristeva argues for the idea of the Muse as an inner feminine creative force.

diately after doubt has ended and before reflection has set in --- *at the dawn of the emotion, when it is not recognized by name* and before the consideration of what this love is" (*Desperate* 1871, 31, my emphasis).

The description of the state of love encourages the idea of an impossible love, as it seems that what the couple is rather tending towards is to live in an eternal state of paradisiacal bliss. Described as short-lived and as a state for which there is no word, what the couple appear rather to be yearning for, when transposed into the present-day terms of Kristeva, is the state of maternal jouissance, or the state referred to by Lacan as 'Other jouissance'. In this manner, by virtue of its inter-text, *Desperate Remedies* (1871) alludes to ideas of art, the artist and artistic production. Though the intertextual links are numerous, in this case *The Aeneid* is specifically referred, to owing to the obvious link through the name Cytherea. Interpreted in relation to this inter-text, the idea of Cytherea and Edward implicitly conveyed is that of their intrinsic artistic natures. Through the signifiance of the narrative, in other words, love appears as a form of desire with which an artistic mind is more apt to identify.[94]

As we shall see, there are further narrative indications of the essentially non-sexual character of the force of attraction between Cytherea and Edward. In agreement with the view of the lovers' yearning as basically non-sexual, Hillis Miller argues that the lovers' yearning for each other in all of Hardy's novels (*Distance* 1970, 114) is really the expression of a displaced religious desire (129-30). When the couple have installed themselves in the little boat, therefore, though an intensity of feeling certainly remains, appearing to be at its highest when they are heading away from shore in silence, their experience thereafter is hardly one of paradisal bliss, as the portrayal of Cytherea reveals:

> Without another word being spoken on either side, they went down the steps. He carefully handed her in, took his seat, slid noiselessly off the sand, and away from shore. They thus sat facing each other in the graceful yellow cockle-shell, and his eyes frequently found a resting-place in the depths of hers. The boat was so small that at each return of the sculls, when his hands came forward to begin

[94] Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject. Between Language and Jouissance.* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997) 105-7. As Fink explains it, Lacan considers "an ordinary sense of love" as an "impossible love" in that there can be no "true relationship between the sexes". According to Lacan, "there is only a non-relationship, an absence of any conceivable direct relationship between the sexes". Desire within the *phallic structure* is always tied to "the father's 'No!'" since it is a "phallic jouissance", the object of which "is only peripherally related to another person". Lacan refers to phallic jouissance as "organ pleasure", as it keeps within the boundaries of the symbolic; in other words, it is "masturbatory in nature".

> the pull, they approached so near to her that her vivid imagination began to thrill her with a fancy that he was going to clasp his arms around her. The sensation grew so strong that she could not run the risk of again meeting his eyes at those critical moments, and turned aside to inspect the distant horizon; then she grew weary of looking sideways, and was driven to return to her natural position again. At this instant he again leant forward to begin, and met her glance by an ardent fixed glance. An involuntary impulse of girlish embarrassment caused her to give a vehement pull at the tiller-rope, which brought the boat's head round till they stood directly for shore.
> His eyes, which had dwelt upon her form during the whole time of her look askance, now left her: he perceived the direction in which they were going. 'Why, you have completely turned the boat, Miss Graye.' He said, looking over his shoulder. 'Look at our track on the water – a great semi-circle, preceded by a series of zigzags as far as we can see. She looked attentively. 'Is it my fault or yours?' she inquired. 'Mine, I suppose? 'I can't help saying that it is yours.' She dropped the ropes decisively, feeling the slightest twinge of vexation at the answer. (*Desperate* 1871, 32)

Though the situation is undeniably erotically charged, the erotic seems to pertain to Cytherea alone, as her wild imaginings and nearly hysterical behaviour are set against Edward's, calm controlled manner, seemingly indifferent to anything of the kind. Clearly, the scene is described in a narrative method referred to by Lothe[95] as 'perspectival modulation', noted as being typical of Hardy, where the narrator creeps in and out of omniscience, alternating it with the limited perspectives of the characters. Here, then, the reader is only given insight into the feelings of Cytherea, while Edward is objectively delineated by the narrative voice from a third person perspective, as if observed by an uninvolved onlooker.

Yet the narrative voice specifies that Cytherea accepted Edward's proposal to go for a row "with Arcadian innocence", as "she assumed a row on the water was under any circumstances, a natural thing" (*Desperate* 1871, 32). In retrospect, it seems ironic, therefore, that she is to anticipate sexual advances by Edward, for evidently, as we have seen, the description "with Arcadian innocence" would be more befitting of him, considering how strikingly sexually oblivious he remains throughout the whole trip[96]. Such an

[95] Jakob Lohte, *Narrative in Fiction and Film. An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 162.
[96] Marlene Springer, *Hardy's Use of Allusion* (Kansas: Press of Kansas, 1983) 29. As Springer observes, "the idea of Cytherea as 'a romantic girl [of] Arcadian innocence' is ironically undermined" in the text.

ironic reversal is thus suggestive of a mockery of Cytherea, signifying a flash of the disruptive semiotic in the narrative indicative of the workings of the phallic function as diminishing, in this case by ridiculing, the feminine. Cytherea's "Arcadian innocence" can nevertheless be argued for here, since her panic at the close contact and insistent, engulfing gaze of Edward betrays her total inexperience of interacting with the opposite sex. For, evidently anticipating a sexual advance, she has made a false assessment of the situation, in that Edward's gaze[97] does not indicate sexual intentions, for "his eyes frequently *found a resting place* in the *depths* of hers" (32, my emphasis), while Cytherea grows silly with the idea that he might suddenly "clasp his arms around her" (32). Clearly, the passage rather suggests that both Cytherea and Edward are of "Arcadian innocence", whereby it reads as an implicit criticism of the conventions and morality of Victorian society. For the row on the lake would certainly have been more pleasant for Cytherea without her sexual anxiety. Seen as a sign of her inexperience, however, it can be understood as resulting from her upbringing, education and reading. What is implicitly criticized is thus the social sanction of the sexual, whose invisible barrier between the sexes unduly complicates matters. In other words, demands of propriety are shown to enhance rather than diminish the sexual element in all mutual dealings between the sexes; in this way, such strict rules come across as working at cross purposes.[98] Though Thomas Hardy may certainly have consciously elaborated his text to implicitly include such a social critique, the ambiguity and imagery lend the passage to a reading in terms of Kristeva and Lacan's theories.

Thus, understood in the light of Kristeva and Lacan's psychoanalytic semiotic theories, the narrative exhibits a flash of authorial sublimation that produces a catharsis of the phallic function; the narrative is therefore made self-reflective, unveiling the function of paternal prohibition at the heart of the Symbolic order. In accordance with the view of the narrative as sustained and nourished by disruptive semiotic motility, therefore, it signifies the imposition of the law of the One, that is, the Law of the Name of the Father

[97] Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject. Between Language and Jouissance* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997) 60-2, 106-12, 91. As Fink explains Lacan's view, however, there can only be a "non-relationship" between the sexes in the sense of a "direct relationship", since, in the Symbolic, "man" and "woman" do not "interact" as such. The memory of pre-Oedipal jouissance gets in the way for those who are wholly determined by "the phallic structure"; the haunting, "phantasmatic" memory of a sense of "wholeness" in relation to the pre-Oedipal experience of the mother is what determines the relationship of desire. The male gaze, being associated by a woman with this pre-Oedipal relationship, is thus regarded by Lacan as "desire-causing" and as determining "the choice of companions".

[98] Richard Taylor, *The Neglected Thomas Hardy: Thomas Hardy's Lesser Novels* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982) 25. As Taylor observes, "Hardy's attitude to love is already gently cynical but, long before his own embittering experiences with Emma, he is openly scornful of the marital contract".

with entry into the Symbolic order: Hence, the narrative figuratively represents the paternal prohibition with the image of an absorbing, intimidating male gaze, taking in a victimized female subject. As we shall further explain below, Kristeva interprets such a portrayal of the male gaze as a metaphor of the thetic, interpreting the appearance of the male gaze in any creative work as imaging the paternal appropriation of the maternal territory as a process of destruction, or abjection; in *Soleil Noir* (1987), Kristeva describes the process as a form of "cannibalism" (173). Interpreted in terms of Lacan's theory of the subject, Edward's gaze suggests the idea of the all-embracing, phallic gaze of the phallic function, which, likened by Lacan to the evil eye, exerts control as an invisible coercive force within the socio-symbolic. As we have previously observed, however, also viewing the phallic gaze in a good light in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* (1977), Lacan maintains that a representation of the phallic gaze within the "big Other" of the Symbolic in creative art has the beneficial soothing, calming effect of cathartic sublimation in the social field (111-116).

With regard to the understanding of Cytherea and Edward's relationship in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) argued for in the above, it is interesting to consider the account of the couple's first trip in a boat when accompanied by Owen, for in this passage Cytherea is likened to the boat, being described as "sitting in the stern with the tiller ropes in her hand. The curves of her figure welded with those of the fragile boat in perfect continuation, as she girlishly yielded herself to its heaving and sinking, seeming to form with it an organic whole" (30). Accordingly, this portrayal of Cytherea, identifying her with the boat, inspires an association of ideas connecting the idea of Cytherea with that of a vessel,[99] so that when interpreted in Platonist terms, she appears as a figurative representation of Plato's notion of the primordial cosmic Mother, the vessel or Chora, in need of the Father principle in order to come to Be (*Timaeus* 1977, 67-77). This can of course be understood as signifying Woman in need of Man, which can then be construed differently depending on the level of interpretation or the context of reading.

Most conspicuously, the association of Cytherea with a vessel, signifying Woman in need of Man, imparts the idea of Cytherea's being physically attracted to Edward. When considered in the light of the passage as an implicit social criticism, however, the interpretation of Cytherea as representing Plato's notion of the primordial cosmic Mother, the Chora in need of the

[99] Maria Schottenius, *Den kvinnliga hemligheten. En studie I Kerstin Ekmans romankonst* Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1992) 206-11. Schottenius notes the ancient Eastern origin of the conception of Woman as a vessel or receptacle. Schottenius also mentions the Celtic mother symbolism of the Graal quest, which was then adopted by the Christians, and that in early Christianity God was considered a feminine power. For more on this see Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother. An Analysis of the Archetype.* Trans. Ralph Manheim (London, Boston, Melbourne and Henley: Routledge, 1963).

Father principle to Be, obliquely conveys the notion of woman's condition in the paternal realm of patriarchy; it communicates the sense of women's economic social dependence on men to give them social acceptance.

When Cytherea is shown as making a fool of herself during the boat ride alone with Edward, there is nevertheless a detectable sympathy for her situation in the narrative voice. For, to some extent, it is Cytherea's experience of the situation which is related. Accordingly, her feeling ill at ease, her anticipation of Edward's advances, her resultant behaviour, involuntary embarrassment and actions, convey the situation from Cytherea's point of view. Yet the omniscient voice is not totally enmeshed in Cytherea's inner world, because then it would be mirrored in the description of Edward's engulfing gaze. Though Edward is seen from the outside, in line with Lothe's observation of "perspectival modulation" as explained above as being typical of Hardy, Edward is presented through the viewpoint of an unengaged third person narrative voice rather than through Cytherea's eyes. For Edward's behaviour bears no trace of the feelings Cytherea projects onto him. In fact, as previously observed, he seems to have no awareness of the situation whatsoever, which is confirmed when he finally gives her the blame for her loss of control of the boat. What is rather obliquely conveyed through this, however, is the workings of the forces of oppression on woman in patriarchy, where she is only allowed to *Be* as defined by man. Edward's engulfing gaze, unrelentingly dwelling upon Cytherea's form, taking her in, controlling her, interpreting, and judging her behaviour, for which, in his view, she is then entirely to blame, thus forcefully portrays the workings of patriarchal oppression, in a manner implicitly conveying a sympathy for the female condition.

The analogy between Cytherea and the boat, as we have seen, encourages a reading that compares Cytherea with the idea of a vessel and the Platonist conception of the Chora. In this perspective, yet another significance of the rowing scene is apparent, however. Interpreted as a metaphor of the idea of a vessel, that is, Cytherea inspires a reading of the passage in the light of Kristeva's theory, attributing to Cytherea the signifiance of the vessel of maternal jouissance, the maternal Chora. As an image of the state of jouissance, Cytherea here also appears as an iconic projection of that state, both within herself, and within Edward, since the vessel with which she is associated, conjuring the notions of the Chora and jouissance, is the little boat in which the two find themselves together. Regarded in this manner, the boat scene is permeated with the signifiance of the two characters' inner being, of their reciprocal yearning for each other, for the prohibited space of maternal jouissance.

As previously observed, Edward's engulfing gaze, with its inhibiting effect on Cytherea, who does all she can to avoid meeting his eyes while steering, when interpreted in Kristeva's terms reflects the appropriation of the

territory of the mother by the paternal Symbolic order. In *Histoires d'amour* (1983) Kristeva analyses the occurrence of gazing or staring in a text as signifying an appropriation, as an act of destruction, of the object subjected to the gaze, which, as previously mentioned, makes it an evident metaphor for the thetic in a text (140-1, 153, 434-43). Put differently, Edward's gaze suggests the sense of paternal prohibition of the maternal space of jouissance (Kristeva *Soleil* 173). Following on from this, however, in the boat passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), the triumph of maternal jouissance is displayed with Cytherea's zigzag steering and her "final involuntary impulse" which turns the boat in a semi-circle heading it towards land, and, as they approach the shore, with her change of mind as she insists on taking over the steering again to once more head the boat out to sea. The occurrences resulting from an "involuntary impulse" and an impulsive change of mind in Cytherea indicate the sense of a loss of control; nevertheless, the portrayal appears to be in defence of the transgression of social boundaries. For Cytherea's refusal to passively submit to Edward's absorbing gaze, taking her in and intent on controlling her whole being, bespeaks maternal jouissance traversing the boundaries of paternal prohibition.

The definitive affirmation of disruptive jouissance, however, is when Edward willingly yields to Cytherea's reassertion of herself by taking over the steering and heading away from land. Responding to her action, he gives her a look which reads: "We understand each other – ah, we do, darling!" and says "Never mind the directness of the course – wherever you will" (34). Not only does Edward transgress paternal prohibition at the foundation of patriarchy by allowing Cytherea, a woman, the freedom to take initiative and command; more generally, he also appears to express his support for Cytherea's inherent rebelliousness, with which he seems to identify.

In accordance with a reading of the text as a defence of transgression as demonstrated in the above, therefore, the text can here also be seen to translate a re-presentation of Thomas Hardy's cathartic creative sublimation on writing. In other words, the text is transfused with the sense of Hardy's having given way to the involuntary impulse of creativity irrupting from within him, disrupting his writing with the maternal motility of jouissance; Hardy's sublimation of prohibited maternal jouissance, that is, has left its trace, disrupting the text with a surplus meaning which makes it highly connotative. As we have seen, the references to art and artistic activity in the narrative contribute to the sense of the couple's yearning as basically non-sexual; apparently, the force of attraction between the couple rather stems from their mutual discovery of their affinity of character, of their sharing an inherent artistic disposition, which propels them towards each other in narcissistic yearning to merge with their mirror image. For on observing Cytherea's

behaviour, as mentioned above, it seems that Edward identifies himself with her, apparently discovering an affinity with her potentially rebellious nature.

Interestingly, during the second round out to sea, the silence between the couple is broken as they begin to discuss the meagre prospects of success in artistic practice. Cytherea is the one to initiate the conversation, by questioning Edward on his poetry writing. The discussion puts Cytherea at ease, and, no longer self-consciously aware of Edward as a male presence, she is shown to formulate her views freely, and to listen attentively to Edward's. In this way the couple are able to forget themselves in a shared interest that has to do with artistic practice. Accordingly described, Edward and Cytherea's shared interest can be understood as a pointer to the true nature of their feelings for each other, with the force of attraction between them conceivably being that of their shared artistic frame of mind. In the light of such a reading, it is interesting that Edward, after having expounded on the inhibiting demands of society on poets, ends his disillusioned resentment with a pose: "He looked into the far distance and paused" (36), for it suggests the signifiance of Edward's yearning as a yearning for an indefinable 'beyond'. Put differently, with his pause and pose, Edward enacts what in fact Cytherea represents for him; she is thus indirectly shown as a means for him to glimpse the realm of the Ideal, the realm 'beyond', for which he as a Poet yearns. The pause accompanying Edward's look into the distance, in that it marks a silence, conjures the sense of his yearning as being a yearning for that which lies beyond the Word.

Viewed from the perspective of Kristeva's theory, the passage is thus regarded as highly connotative, and also conveys the sense of a defence in celebration of maternal jouissance, for the effect of the narrative as a palimpsest manifests the irruption of maternal jouissance within Thomas Hardy while writing; the text, that is, illustrates its own re-opening of the thetic onto trans-symbolic, maternal jouissance. Hence, symbolically, with his pose and pause, Edward conjures the idea of his inherent longing for the prohibited maternal space. In this view, Cytherea appears an iconic projection not only of what she signifies for Edward, but also of what she more generally conjures in the narrative, that is, the sense of disruptive maternal jouissance as the creative force which nourishes the text in which she is figured.

Yet another highly connotative part of this passage, suggestive of the inherently non-sexual force of attraction between Cytherea and Edward, is when they are shown admiring the underwater scenery from the boat. As Beatty observes in the introduction of *Desperate Remedies* (1871), when interpreting the purple light in this passage as having its poetic source in Virgil, it evokes the idea of the couple's passion. Furthermore, Beatty writes: "The bliss of the young lovers is hinted at, too, in the description of what

they see beneath the surface of the water where tiny creatures and even weeds seem to partake of the same harmony" (Beatty "Introduction" 1975, xv). For with the air so "strikingly calm", it leaves the surface of the sea "of that rare glassy smoothness" of a mirror, in which the couple see shades of blues and purples and a "silvery radiance" reflecting "upwards to their eyes". What the sea with its near celestial ambiance of harmony mirrors, in other words, appears to be the image of the couple's inner selves in one of those Shelleyan "evanescent visitations of thought and feeling" of the creative spirit (*Defense of Poetry* 1891, 35).

As we have previously observed, however, in *Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire* (1970), Hillis Miller claims there is a religious dimension to the lovers' desire in Hardy's fiction, interpreting it as displaced desire for a substitute God to fill the void in their Godless world (114, 124-30). Yet in Miller's view, the background imagery of the love scenes externalizes the characters' "hidden selves" (138): "All things share in the divine glow of the loved one and have become expressions of his godlike power […] all declare the glory of [the loved one's] presence in the world" (132).

Worthy of note is thus the critics' leaning toward a connotative reading of this passage as a highly symbolic projection of the characters' inner world. In view of this, and noting an apparent inter-textual link in it with a quotation from Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) reflecting on Bergson's view of the spiritual force of life, the imagery may additionally be regarded as an iconic projection of the characters' insight into life: "So life presses on by its own inherent impulse; not unhampered by the inert mass through which it flows, yet constantly struggling with it, eating patiently into the most recalcitrant rock, breaking through the softer soil in channels least foreseen" (Vol. 2, 219).

As the underwater scene is described in the novel quoted below, therefore:

> The cliffs here were formed of strata completely contrasting with those of the further side of the Bay, whilst in and beneath the water hard boulders had taken the place of sand and shingle, between which, however, the sea glided noiselessly, without breaking the crest of a single wave, so strikingly calm was the air. The breeze had entirely died away, leaving the water of that rare glassy smoothness which is unmarked even by small dimples of the least aerial movement. Purples and blues of diverse shades were reflected from this mirror accordingly as each undulation sloped east or west. They could see the rocky bottom some twenty feet beneath them, luxuriant with weeds of various growths, and dotted with pulpy creatures reflecting a silvery radiance upwards to their eyes. (*Desperate* 1871, 37)

As we see, the ideas expressed in the quotation from Bergson associate well with the imagery of the quoted passage of the novel. The symbolic significance of the colors is suggestive of a near otherworldly, spiritual experience, which, when understood in the context here argued for, of the characters' shared creative faculty, conveys the Shelleyan sense of the characters' participating "in the eternal, the infinite, and the one" (*Defense of Poetry* 1891, 6), in an evanescent moment of insight into the beauty and perfection of the realm of the Ideal beyond the realm of shadows they are living in (33-8). As we shall see, the evident inter-textual link here, to a poem by Shelley, not only evokes Shelley's Platonist Romantic conception of poetic inspiration as a sense of merging with the universe, it also lends a metafictional dimension to the text, leading the reader away from its plot level to rather take pleasure in seeking to understand its levels of connotation. On exhibiting itself as artefact, that is, the narrative redirects its focus to an underlying theme pertaining to art and creativity. For, with the "silvery radiance" connoting creativity reflecting from the depths of the sea, as a mirror image of the couple's inner selves, it suggests the sense of their belonging together in their shared creative faculty. As Shelley writes, "this power arises from within, like the colour of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed" (*Defense of Poetry* 1891, 34).[100] In this manner, the narrative presents an iconic projection of Edward and Cytherea's artistic insight into the real as mere appearance, while simultaneously communicating the sense of a tacit understanding developing between them.

Highly connotative, as we have seen, the passage can also be understood as self-reflective when examined in the light of Kristeva and Lacan's psychoanalytic semiotic theories. Accordingly, the passage then appears to display its process of signifiance*,* metaphorically re-presenting the trans-symbolic movement of the disruptive semiotic maternal*,* working its way through the symbolic*,* which it nourishes in the creative act of cathartic sublimation. Thus, the undulating flow of the sea, the shades of blue and the purple, the near celestial calm and silence, and the silvery radiance, appearing like a star, reflecting upwards from the bottom of the sea, evoke the sense of pre-Oedipal maternal jouissance, which both Kristeva and Lacan conceive as the source of the creative faculty (Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 81; *Histoires* 1983, 114-5, 381, 386). The creative power transfusing the narrative, that is, figuratively reveals itself in a self-reflective instance of the narrative through the portrayal of Edward and Cytherea's fascination when they admire the underwater scene. Encouraging an association of ideas connecting

[100] Margaret Elvy, *Sexing Hardy: Thomas Hardy and Feminism* (Kent, UK: Crescent Moon Publishing, 2007) 46-61. Elvy notices that Shelley's influence on Hardy is noticeable as a subtext in many of his novels.

the delineation of the couple, spellbound by the underwater scene, with that of Narcissus enthralled by his reflection in the pool of water, the scene conjures up the sense of the couple as entranced by the reflection of themselves. As they are admiring an underwater scene, however, the portrayal is suggestive of the sense of the reflection as being that of their inner selves. The couple, thus shown as losing themselves in awe of what they see in the water, appear as an iconic projection of a yearning to immerse themselves in its realm; they appear united, that is, in their experience of silent understanding of the form of their desire. In other words, the narrative is transfused with the sense of their desire for the lost territory of the mother of pre-symbolic jouissance. In this context, the intertextual link in the symbolism of the narrative to a quotation from Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) on Bergson's view of life, referred to above, transposes well into Kristeva's terms to reflect the sense of the flow of disruptive maternal jouissance which "works on, moves through, and threatens" the foundational rock of the Symbolic order (Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 81). Symbolically, therefore, Edward and Cytherea being carried in their boat by the undulating flow of the sea conveys the sense of their belonging to the maternal territory of the Chora, in desire for the idealized memory of its harmonious, undulating flow. Looking down into the depths of the sea, the couple see the "inert mass" of rock beneath, a perfect image, as we have previously seen, of the Symbolic order, the view of which, being submersed in water, conveys the sense of their desire to immerse themselves in the waters of maternal jouissance.

The harmony of the scene thus reflects the couple's state of total fulfilment on being together; it mirrors a flash of their idealized memory of the pre-symbolic maternal space as life in Elysium: "Everything on earth seemed taking a contemplative rest" (*Desperate* 1871, 37). In a state of unison with the world, therefore, they kiss: "The gentle sounds around them from the hills, the plains, the distant town, the adjacent shore; the water heaving at their side, the kiss, and the long kiss, were 'all many a voice of one delight', and in unison with each other" (38).

In a similar manner, the view of Cytherea and Edward's desire as an essentially narcissistic yearning for the Imaginary comes across more forcefully still with the portrayal of the couple's encounter on the day of Cytherea's marriage of convention with Manston. For Cytherea's emotional state on seeing the figure of Edward in the chantry following after the marriage ceremony is evidently not only related to an arousal of her longing since: "The sight was a sad one – sad beyond all description. His eyes were wild, the orbits leaden. His face was of a sickly paleness, his hair dry and disordered, his lips parted as if he could get no breath. His figure was spectre-thin. His actions seemed

beyond his control" (201). Of primary interest here is the reference to Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale", with the line, "His figure was spectre-thin".[101] Not only does the reference create a sense of contrived artificiality whereby the narrative calls attention to itself as a textual construct, but through this, an intertextual connection with the Romantics is formed, which further encourages the reader, more generally, to take heed of notions of art and artistic experience when reading; it invites the reader to consider an underlying theme related to theories of art and the creative faculty embedded in the narrative, which adds yet another dimension to the appreciation of the novel.

Hence, Edward's figure appears an intangible apparition, as if it were his "spirit" revealing itself rather than his bodily presence being there. This sense is strengthened when, having decided to scold him for his "unwarrantable intrusion", Owen fails to find him: "As he had come, so he had gone, nobody could tell how or whither" (201). Put differently, that Edward is here described in terms reminiscent of Shelley's conception of one of those "evanescent visitations" of the creative spirit, as explicated in his *Defense of poetry* (1891, 35-6), where, moreover, Shelley indirectly refers to Keats when likening a poet to a nightingale[102], creates an intertextual connection suggestive of Neoplatonist ideas of the Romantics on art and the creative faculty, with the sense of an underlying theme more generally related to artistic experience. In the light of this, therefore, Cytherea, noticeably emotionally roused by her glimpse of this spirit-like apparition of Edward, evokes the idea of her being subject to a visitation of the evanescent creative spirit. For, as mentioned above, through its intertextual references to the Romantic Neoplatonist ideas on the creative spirit, the narrative, made covertly[103] self-referential by thus revealing its status as mere artefact, solicits a reading linking Cytherea's state of arousal with that of artistic inspiration.

Of course, a marriage of convenience represents a form of inner death for anyone having to accept it as a recourse. In the terms of Kristeva and even of a Lacanian understanding, a marriage of convenience thus appears a perfect illustration of the process of abjection of the paternal realm of the Symbolic order, as it forcefully emblematizes the murder of the soma, or the body, within the phallic structure. The marriage of convenience of Cytherea, however, is the more painful because of her creative disposition. For as we shall

[101] See the footnote in Thomas Hardy, *Desperate Remedies* (1871), (London: Macmillan, 1986) 343.

[102] Percy Bysshe Shelley, *A Defense of Poetry and Other Essays.* Ed. Albert S. Cook (Boston: Gin & Company, 1891) 10. "A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds; his auditors are as men entranced by the melody of an unseen musician, who feel they are moved and softened, yet know not whence or why".

[103] Linda Hutcheon, *Narcissistic Narrative. The metafictional Paradox* (Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013).

see, on a metaphorical level and in Kristeva's terms, the effect Cytherea's marriage is shown to have on her imparts the idea of mother identification with the imposition of the thetic, giving rise to a sense of loss and inner death. Hence, the extreme revivifying effect on Cytherea of her glimpse of Edward reads as a metaphor of the experience of maternal jouissance, of the soma revived, not only in Cytherea, on glimpsing her soulmate and mirror image Edward as a reflection of her subdued, inner, living self, but also as a trace of the disruptive semiotic in the narrative in and through the thetic. In view of such an interpretation, the effect Cytherea's glimpse of Edward has on her comes across through its portrayal in the narrative in the form of an iconic projection of a state of artistic inspiration. Thus, the narrative also communicates the sense of an unconscious representation of prohibited maternal jouissance irrupting from within Hardy on writing, in whose creative work the resurrected soma has left the trace of its disruption.

Later, during Cytherea's walk in the garden for a "moment of solitude […] her last of freedom" (204), she glimpses Edward once again: "A man was lingering along the path on the other side of the river; she fancied she knew the form" (204). Of interest here is both the manner in which the event is depicted and the site of the occurrence, in that they call to mind the Medieval poem, *The Pearl,* which describes an unattainable apparition, an enticing Vision, revealing itself to the protagonist on the other side of a river. although it is described in the poem as being merely a dream, it appears more like a waking dream, since the message it relates is sent from God, revealing that the Paradise of Eternity can only be entered after death, so that life on earth is a prison-house for the soul during the course of which it must prove itself pleasing to God.[104]

Though the theme of the poem is explicitly Christian, its topic, being one of yearning for an unattainable 'beyond' in this life, glimpsed in a Vision, appears essentially Platonist. The depiction of Cytherea's encounter with Edward on the other side of the river thus calls forth associations, as though *The Pearl* has left a trace in the narrative, shining through it, as an absent presence, conjuring other levels of interpretation, of its signifiance. The intertextual link to the poem therefore, strengthens the argument that Cytherea's longing for Edward is suggestive of a form of yearning which is more reminiscent of that of an artist than of love in an ordinary sense; in a Romantic Neoplatonist perspective, that is, it comes across as an artist's yearning for the ever lost realm of the Ideal, of eternal Truth and Beauty. In the terms of Kristeva or Lacan, the scene imparts the sense of Cytherea's

[104] *The Pearl* Eds.. Giovanni Boccaccio and Sir Israel Gollancz (London: Chiatto and Windus, 1921).
https://archive.org/stream/pearlanenglishpo00boccuoft/pearlanenglishpo00boccuoft_djvu.txt (retrieved July 8, 2020).

yearning for the ever lost and therefore idealized object of desire within the phallic structure or function; it is transfused with the sense of Cytherea's yearning for the prohibited territory of the mother.

In both a Romantic Neoplatonist and present-day psychological perspective, though in a different manner for each, it is noteworthy that it is the "form" of Edward which Cytherea fancies she recognizes on the other side of the river. In a Romantic Neoplatonist reading, therefore, Edward appears an iconic projection of the unattainable realm of the Ideal, of the Forms of Truth and Beauty yearned for by Cytherea, and of which her creative spirit allows for momentary glimpses in states of poetic Vision. Hence, in view of the intertextual link to *The Pearl*, Cytherea recognizing the "form" of Edward on the other side of the river conjures up the sense of the portrayal as an iconic projection of her longing for release from the prison-house of ordinary life, to enter the paradisal 'beyond' of the realm of the Ideal. Such a reading is further strengthened through the symbolism of the scenery on Cytherea's side of the river, which apparently reflects her depressed and melancholic mood, and sense of impending inner death: "A large tree, thickly robed in ivy, had been considerably depressed by its icy load of the morning and hung low over the stream, which ran slow deep" (*Desperate* 1871, 204).

Cytherea, discovering the figure of Edward reflected in the river as if recognizing him in a painting, also inspires an interpretation in terms of Neoplatonism, conveying ideas on art and artistic experience. Hence Cytherea, finding solace on seeing Edward thus reflected in the water reads as a symbolic representation of her sudden artist's insight into their shared creative faculties propelling them towards each other like a magnetic force. Further signified through this is that the couple's yearned for realm of the Ideal, of eternal Beauty and Truth, can be attained in this life through art and artistic practice. For, although it is a mere imitation of the multifaceted, chaotic flow of life that is reflected in the stream, a work of art, represented by the figure of Edward mirrored in the water, reflects the very essence of life, forming a reproduction of the momentary access to the realm of the Ideal by the inspired artist possessed by the creative daimon.

In a present-day psychological perspective, however, the imagery of the river scene, with its intertextual link to *The Pearl,* though similarly interpreted as communicating the sense of an artistic yearning, emphasizes that it is the "form" of Edward which Cytherea first recognizes, and which thus takes on a different significance. As we shall see, the river appears a perfect image of the thetic, shown to separate as it unites. With Cytherea first recognizing the "form" of Edward on the other side of the river, and with the river imparting the sense of separation, of course, but in this case also of a

split, of a scission, the delineation of the event evokes the notion of Cytherea first seeing Edward as he is represented within the Symbolic order. Viewed in this manner, the narrative forms an iconic projection of Cytherea's more acute artistic insight into the human condition, intuiting the constitutive split which forms us, making us 'other than ourselves'. As we have argued all along, Edward and Cytherea live with each other as twin souls, hence Cytherea seeing Edward as mere "form", separated from her by the river, reflects her realization of her sense of self as divided, with, on the one side, the empty "form", which the identity of her social Symbolic self represents for her, and on the other, the implications for such as her, of the imposition of this Other on her primary sense of self as the Real Other, as an experience of inner death, as conveyed by the imagery in the description of her side of the river. In the perspective of Kristeva's theory, the narrative can here also be seen to impart Hardy's own experience of the thetic as associated with depression, pain and alienation.

Significantly, Edward and Cytherea only first identify each other when discovering each other's reflections in the river. Thus, on seeing Edward's image in the water Cytherea wonders: "Can it be possible that he sees my reflected image, as I see his? Of course he does" (205). With regard to the intertextual links of this passage, as we have seen, to the poem *The Pearl*, to Keats' *Ode to a Nighingale* and to Shelley's Romantic Neoplatonism in his *Defense of Poetry,* contributing to connotations of ideas pertaining to creativity and artistic experience, further strengthening the view of such an underlying theme is another obvious intertextual link to the *Myth of Narcissus*. According to Kristeva, this myth dramatizes the formative scission of the self at the onset of the thetic by illustrating primary narcissism as its agent, giving rise to the imposition of a unified identity within the Symbolic order. For primary narcissism is of the territory of the mother, and the myth of Narcissus signifies its Aufhebung; it presents the coming to consciousness of the subject, when, in order to become One s/he must come to regard him/herself as an object of contemplation[105]. However, the myth also translates the impossible dream at the root of primary narcissism; it illustrates the narcissistic yearning constitutive of the Symbolic order, which can never be satisfied within this order, however; in other words, the myth also conveys that this Aufhebung is never complete; there is always a residue in the form of a memory of the lost, prohibited maternal object of jouissance, with a yearning for this lost territory of the pre-symbolic self, beyond the paternal prohibition of the Symbolic order. Kristeva further points out that the Gnostic version of the myth rather dwells on the yearning to merge with the reflection, which is not recognized as such. With its emphasis on the idea of

[105] Julia Kristeva, *Histoires d'amour* (Paris: Folio essais, 1983) 142-3.

yearning, therefore, the Gnostic myth rather highlights the desire for a state of non-being (Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 151).

Clearly, the *Myth of Narcissus* embedded in the narrative contributes to the sense of an underlying theme of art and the creative faculty. Thus, it exhibits the idea of the couple's desire as the narcissistic yearning to merge with the pre-symbolic self of the maternal territory of jouissance of an impossible love, more in line with the Lacanian idea of the feminine jouissance of the creatively inclined than with love in its ordinary sense. For with Kristeva's understanding of the flow of water symbolizing the territory of the mother, that Cytherea and Edward first recognize each other on discovering each other's reflections in the river signifies their mutual discovery of their emotional bond as a reciprocal yearning for the territory of the mother. In this manner, the narrative presents an iconic projection of the couple's discovery of their shared creative faculties, giving rise to an identificatory understanding of being other than themselves, with its implications of a sense of loss and yearning. As a metaphor of the imposition of the thetic, the river scene thus forcefully displays what both divides and unites the two, for: "They looked at the river, then into it […] though narrow, the stream was deep, and there was no bridge" (*Desperate* 1871, 207). Through its imagery, as we have seen, the river episode hence evokes the idea of an impossible love, for in a sense, separated by the form of their desire, which is poignant and deep, and with the object of desire seemingly inaccessible, for "there was no bridge", it is the form of their desire which attracts the couple to each other, like a mirroring of their inner sense of self, which, through a reciprocal understanding, gives rise to a bondage. Their first recognition of each other in their reflections in the water, metaphorically conveying, as we have seen, the notion of primary narcissism, is hence an indication in the narrative that the force of attraction between them is in fact that of their shared creative faculties. It calls forth the idea that their yearning, like that of an artist, is in effect for an ideal state of total fulfilment; it is an impossible ideal, only attainable through the creative faculty. For their reflections in the river, mirror images of themselves superimposed on the flow of water, appear symbolic of artistic production, not only communicating the sense of narcissistic desire, but also the idea that the total fulfilment the couple yearn for is attainable through creative activity only.

Even so, in a manner characteristic of Hardy, as noted by Richard Taylor[106], the passage gives an oblique criticism of society. For after Cytherea has revealed Miss Aldclyffe's and Manston's scheme of coercing Cytherea into marrying Manston, Edward informs Cytherea that he has come to tell

[106] Richard H. Taylor, *The Notebooks of Thomas Hardy* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1978).

her of his broken engagement with his cousin in the hope of winning her back, while Cytherea clarifies how she came to accept a marriage against her will (*Desperate* 1871, 205-7). In other words, the couple's conversation revolves around the restrictions of the social order which have impeded on their happiness and led to their separation. Clearly, therefore, at a more obvious level than in the above, the river separating the couple, each on their side of the bank, pictorially represents the preventive circumstances in life hindering their happy union. Accordingly suggestive of the couple's coming to realize the extent to which they are victims of their environment, the river scene communicates an insight likewise expressed in Hardy's personal writings: "Even imagination is the slave of stolid circumstance; and the unending flow of inventiveness which finds expression in the literature of Fiction is no exception to the general law. It is conditioned by its surroundings like a river-stream" (Orel 1966, 125). Cytherea and Edward coming to meet by discovering their reflections in the river thus also reads as an expression of this idea of the illusory nature of their self-image as self-sufficient individuals with a freedom of choice. In view of such a reading, that is, the couple's recognizing themselves as mirrored in the river, symbolically conveys the idea of the all-encompassing, inhibiting influence on us of the social order.

Comparably to the above, in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Elfride's relationship with Knight appears to be of a similar kind to Edward and Cytherea's in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), and which we have also seen Elfride has with Stephen; the force of attraction between Elfride and Knight, that is, comes across as essentially narcissistic. As previously observed, therefore, Elfride is transported into a "contemplative state" during a discussion with Knight on fame (*Blue Eyes* 1873, 127), a state which, as it is perceived in the context of this project, signifies an experience of the creative imagination giving rise to the insight about the couple's affinity of temperament. Thus, the narrative signifies that Knight may not be as fully integrated into the phallic Symbolic as it first appears. Accordingly, in consternation about his own being attracted to Elfride, Knight attempts to understand the nature of this attraction. What Knight is shown to realize about his feelings for Elfride, then, is revelatory of the uncertainty of his position within the Symbolic order. As Knight is given to reflect, "he appeared to himself to have fallen in love with her soul" (150), thus indicating his suffering of the non-sexual form of desire, distinctive, as we have seen, of the creatively inclined. Moreover, there are indications of Knight being something of a gambler in that he is shown to trust in chance, accident and coincidence to guide him in life (23). As we have noticed, there are instances of signifiance in the character portrayal of Knight, suggestive of his living in denial, in abjection of the feminine heterogeneity within him, which he nevertheless unconsciously

senses to be an integral part of him. As we have mentioned, Knight reveals a propensity to obey the logic of excess, which, when interpreted in Kristeva's terms, is a sign of his essentially creative or artistic bent.

It seems, therefore, that Knight and Elfride are driven to gravitate towards each other by their affinity of character, by their reciprocal understanding of each other, rather than by desire for what Lacan refers to as phallic jouissance, ordinarily associated with love in the socially acceptable sense. Accordingly, Elfride is shown to share the tendency of yearning for the impossible love, as the narrative describes her: "For [Elfride] was markedly one of those who sigh for the unattainable" (162). Moreover, as we know, Elfride is explicitly associated with creativity in the novel through her impulse to write. On the other hand, as previously indicated, Knight's desire for Elfride is presented in a more ambiguous light, in the same vein as we shall see that Miss Aldclyffe's desire for Cytherea in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) is implicitly conveyed, through narrative pointers revelatory of these chatacters' suffering from a state of psychological repression of their desire for the unattainable, prohibited Other jouissance. Like Miss Aldclyffe, who is characterized as not being of the marrying kind, "in her soul as solitary as Robinson Crusoe" (49), therefore, Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) is described as "a bachelor by nature" (151) who "loved philosophically rather than romantically" (151); in other words, Knight is described as loving in a manner more associated with the idea of an artist's aspiration for an experience of the creative imagination than for the erotic. Indeed, Knight's burgeoning feelings for Elfride are conveyed in terms suggestive of the idea of artistic sublimation: "Not until they were parted, and she had become sublimated in his memory, could he be said to have attentively even regarded her. Thus, having passively gathered up images of her which his mind did not act upon till the cause of them was no longer before him…" (150). Knight's desire, that is, associates well with Kristeva and Lacan's view of the sublimated desire of primary narcissism for the lost maternal object in the Symbolic order, or the phallic function; in other words, Knight's desire appears to be that of the creatively inclined, tending towards an unattainable Ideal. Knight's pursuit of absolutes thus exposes his repressed creative potential, of which he lives in denial, apparently fearing its force as a threat to his sense of identity within the paternal Symbolic order. Thus understood, Knight's virulent critique of Elfride's novelette is suggestive of his having identified the mark in it of the creative power of prohibited feminine jouissance; his virulence betrays his having recognized a feared, abject heterogeneity within himself which he seeks to deny. The signifiance of Knight's violent reaction in response to Elfride's writing, in other words, calls up the sense of the process of paternal abjection of prohibited maternal jouissance.

Indeed, on being asked by Elfride why he did not write novels, Knight admits his disillusionment with life. Revealing his broken dreams to Elfride, Knight is shown to give away his inner self of repressed desire: "I consider my life to some extent a failure […] in some way I have missed the mark" (148).

Significantly, therefore, Knight's near-death experience, where Elfride saves his life at a precipice referred to as "the Cliff without a Name", can be understood as a narrative instance of signifiance. Hence the portrayal of Knight, hovering between life and death when clinging to "the Cliff without a Name", in fear of death by falling into the precipice, appears an iconic projection of the implications of the process of the paternal abjection of feminine jouissance. As we have previously observed, prohibited, feminine jouissance is "without a Name" within the phallic Symbolic order. At the root of paternal abjection, in other words, is the fear of death; for the creative power of feminine jouissance of the maternal represents a death threat for the symbolic self within the paternal realm. The experience of the creative, disruptive power of the prohibited maternal realm of feminine jouissance, as we have previously noticed in this project, can be likened to that of falling into an abysmal precipice beyond symbolic representation. Hence, Keen's analysis of Knight's 'near-death' experience when hanging from the cliff as a nightmarish, fleeting impression of "time itself collaps[ing]" (*Hardy's Brains* 2014, 206) is pertinent in this context, for it notes the eerie sense of the abject transfusing the narrative. With Knight's experience thus considered as conveying the sense of the abject, it appears suggestive of the threshold state of ex-sistence of the truly feminine within the phallic function as defined by Lacan, with its accompanying sense of danger and impending death. What is thus metaphorically communicated about the character Knight, in this scene, is the sudden insight he gains about the process of paternal abjection. When Knight is saved by Elfride, who, as we have argued, features as the creative abject in the narrative, the whole portrayal of the action can be understood as an iconic projection of Knight's acceptance of this force within his symbolic self, as a source of life. For, as Keen appropriately notes, when describing Knight's insightful change of perspective while hanging on the cliff face, he is struck by a "salutary awareness of human insignificance in the universe" (*Hardy's Brains* 2014, 206). However, Knight's insight when observing the embedded fossils with long-dead creatures staring back at him can equally be interpreted in this context as conveying the sense of his insight, there and then, about life as a living death within the Symbolic order; metaphorically imparted is thus also the sense of Knight's insight about language under the Law of the Name of the Father as fossilized, like the eyes of the fossils confronting him, "dead and turned to stone" (*Blue Eyes* 1873, 206).

In a similar way to Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Miss Aldclyffe in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) is delineated as seemingly well integrated into the paternal Symbolic order. In other words, the depiction of Miss Aldclyffe, like that of Knight, evidences an ambiguity in her that is suggestive of a repressed creative potential. As opposed to the characterization of Knight, whose ambivalence shines through the narrative by way of its signifiance, the duality of Miss Aldclyffe is made explicit in the narrative. Thus, Miss Aldclyffe's suffering from repressed heterogeneity is vividly described by its outer manifestation, making her appear "like a fountain, always herself, yet always another" (93). Indeed, though Miss Aldclyffe is anchored within the Symbolic order in her role as an employer, she is nevertheless living in the condition of being a woman within the paternal realm of patriarchy. Moreover, Miss Aldclyffe is evidently a passionate woman who is characterized as an older disillusioned version of Cytherea, again suggesting the sense of withheld strong contradictory forces inside her. As Richard Nemesvari expresses it when analyzing the novel in terms of Victorian anxieties about the loss of masculinity in a society of rapidly expanding capitalism (*Sensationalism* 2011, 28): "Miss Aldclyffe is indeed unladylike and unwomanly in her aggressive reactions, and in her rejection of the passive, self-repressive role that defined proper Victorian female behavior" (30). Presented as an integral part of the Symbolic order obeying the Law of the Father, however, the disruptive maternal power of Miss Aldclyffe is thus displayed in the ambiguous light of the process of paternal abjection. Accordingly, the portrayal of Miss Aldclyffe as a woman in power within the paternal realm of a patriarchal social order, living in denial of her creative potential, is imbued with the sense of the inexpressible feminine within the phallic function. As we have previously seen Lacan explicate the subject position of woman within the realm of the Law of the Father, that is, the depiction of Miss Aldclyffe is evidently transfused with the sense of her state of ex-sistence. There is therefore an ambiguity in the representation of Miss Aldclyffe as a threatening figure of a woman, both phallic and maternal in one, conjuring up the idea of her as illustrative of the phallic Mother.

As previously noted, in *The Return of the Native* (1876), Eustacia compares well with both Cytherea and Miss Aldclyffe in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), in appearing determined by the feminine structure, aspiring for the Other jouissance of creative sublimation, as we have seen it explicated by Lacan. Depicted in a manner that calls forth the sense of the Romantic Sublime, Eustacia is presented as an ambiguous figure, awakening an eerie feeling of fear mixed with attraction both in the people around her and in the reader alike. Indeed, as previously mentioned, Eustacia associates well with Kristeva's idea of the abject, understood at a meta-narrative level as a

metaphor, a representation in the narrative of the potentially disruptive abject maternal territory. More similar to Miss Aldclyffe than Cytherea, therefore, Eustacia is described as living in "smouldering rebelliousness" (*Return* 1876, 119); she is "full of nocturnal mysteries" (118-9), living in desire, it seems, for what she is not able to understand, yearning for what she perhaps does not dare to admit to herself, for, as the narrative reads, "she had even longed to be free" (123). Interpreted in this context, Eustacia's undefinable state of longing inspires the idea of the desire of primary narcissism for an idealized memory of a lost harmonious love; in Kristeva's terms, that is, the portrayal of Eustacia conveys the sense of her as mother-identifying. Characteristically, therefore, Eustacia's feelings for Clym in *The Return of the Native* (1876) seem to be those of an unformulated drive to escape from her smothering surroundings rather than love in its ordinary sense, in that her feelings apparently have nothing to do with Clym. When Clym's overstrained eyes prevent the couple from going to Paris, in other words, the narrative reveals Eustacia's total lack of concern for Clym when she is described as crying "in sick despair at the thought of the blasting effect upon her own life" (313-4). Clym is shown to react to her callousness, "Has your love for me all died, then?" (314). Clearly, however, when interpreted in this context, Clym's passion for Eustacia is revelatory of a repressed yearning for prohibited Other jouissance, beyond the Law of the Father; for as we shall see, his blind passion for Eustacia conjures up the sense of his being driven by the desire of the creatively inclined, propelling him, in abjection of paternal prohibition, towards the idealized memory of prohibited jouissance that she awakens in him. As Clym's philanthropic plan of enriching the lives of the rustics with education reveals, he is essentially rebellious; thus, as it is explained: "He wished to raise the class at the expense of the individuals" (230). Still, being an educated man of learning, like Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Angel in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), or Jude in *Jude the Obscure* (1896), Clym's repressed desire, when given an outlet, proves to be a disruptive transformative force, both for him and for his surroundings (*Return* 1876, 335, 443). Nevertheless, the vent to Clym's repressed desire is opened by the powerful effect of Eustacia on him, so that in effect it is her strong, disruptive influence which precipitates events, and

ultimately gives rise to social change[107].

Indeed, Clym's desire for Eustacia must be seen in connection with his relationship with his mother. For, apparently like Miss Aldclyffe, who is presented as a "disillusioned Cytherea", Mrs Yeobright invites a comparison with Eustacia. As Woodcock remarks, in the "Introduction" to the Penguin edition of *The Return of the Native* (1876, 1978), "[Mrs Yeobright is] a Eustacia who has survived and eventually given up the struggle" (34). For, as it is expressed in the novel, "[Mrs Yeobright] had once dreamt of doing better things" (*Return* 1876, 83). Clym's desire for Eustacia can thus be seen in relation to the strong bond he evidently has with his mother; his relationship with his mother, that is, reads well in Lacan's terms as exhibiting the phallic function with its process of symbolic 'castration' of the subject. Viewed in the light of Lacan's theory, in other words, Mrs Yeobright's striving to gratify her own thwarted ambitions through her son is suggestive of her 'want-to-be' within the Symbolic; hence, in desire of what she lacks, Clym's prohibited desire of the mother is propelled to fill her lack of being; his prohibited desire of the mother, become desire of the (m)Other, is thus sublimated into the phallic Symbolic Other. As we have seen, however, Clym's philanthropism is indicative of his essentially creative disposition. In rebellion against the social system he is living in, his striving to improve the quality of life of the rustics is in effect an expression of repressed desire; it is an act of sublimation of his repressed desire for prohibited maternal jouissance. Thus, Clym's desire for the abject Eustacia is yet another expression of his yearning for release from paternal prohibition, as it seems he recognizes the reflection of his desire for Other jouissance in her. Clym's desire for Eustacia is thus an essentially narcissistic yearning, propelling him towards her as if trapped in her magnetic field.

Another male admirer of Eustacia is Damon Wildeve. He is more obviously compatible with Eustacia in character, however, for, described as a hedonist, he shares her propensity to yearn for the remote and difficult, and,

[107] The tragic circumstances disrupt the equilibrium of the heath to bring about a change of attitude in its inhabitants. Clym is thus accepted as a member of the community despite his refutation of worldly success: "He was kindly received, for the story of his life had become generally known" (*Desperate* 1871, 474).
A narrative sign of another kind resulting from the disruptive force of prohibited desire is the transformation it gives rise to in Diggory Venn, however. See also Noorul Hasan, *Thomas Hardy. The Sociological Imagination* (London Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982) 55. Hasan describes Venn as "an organic part of [the heath], […] exhibiting the inertness of the desert". Venn thus appears as a metaphor of the inertness of life on the heath prior to the tragic circumstances effecting disruption. Viewed at a meta-narrative level, Diggory Venn's transformation into taking an active part by changing his life and giving up his declining profession as a reddleman, to become a dairyman in order to marry Thomasin, evokes the idea of him as an iconic projection of the idea of the social transformation of the heath (*Return* 1876, 430).

like her, he is dissatisfied with life on the heath. As Wildeve is described, therefore: "To be yearning for the difficult, to be weary of that offered, to care for the remote, to dislike the near, it was Wildeve's nature always" (*Return* 1876, 274). Moreover, he reveals his yearning for escape to Eustacia at one point by exclaiming, "God how lonely it is! […] Why should we stay here? […] I abhor it [the heath] too" (139). In Kristeva and Lacan's psychoanalytic terms, Damon Wildeve is evidently a man living in excess, whose surplus vitality, revelatory of his threshold subject position within the phallic Symbolic order, is characteristic of mother identification and ordinarily associated with an artistic temperament. Viewed thus, Wildeve's yearning for escape seems in effect to be a yearning for release from the prohibiting realm of the Law of the Father. For, like Eustacia, he evidently desires Other jouissance. Such a view of the two characters Wildeve and Eustacia, therefore, sheds new light on the couple's death by drowning, clasped in each other's arms; it is a fate which George Woodcock, in his "Introduction" (1978) to the novel, finds ironic in that, in comparison to Eustacia, Woodcock finds Wildeve "unconvincing" and "incomplete" as a character (31). However, Eustacia herself is shown to note their resemblance of character when, at one point after her clash with Clym, she is revealed as thinking "How close she was to Wildeve" (*Return* 1876, 303). Hardly ironic, therefore, the couple's dead bodies, found in the water in a tight embrace, appears an iconic projection of the sense of their belonging to the realm of the abject maternal; Eustacia and Wildeve's death by drowning, that is, signifies the logic of their lives in excess as their shared expression of prohibited desire of Other jouissance. Hence, illustrative of paternal abjection of the excess of maternal jouissance, Wildeve and Eustacia are shown to belong together in death, forming an iconic projection of the death of the soma within the paternal realm of the Symbolic order. The couple's drowning, that is, signifies their belonging together in their desire for the prohibited, unattainable territory of the maternal feminine; thus, it also inspires the sense of their experience of the phallic function as a force of death.

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), we have seen how Angel and Tess's desire has led them to an idealization of each other, with Tess seeing Angel more as an intelligence than as a man, while Angel, blinded by Romantic preconceptions acquired through his reading, believes Tess to be all purity and simplicity, a "daughter of the soil" for him to teach and to guide, and make his, "to carry [off] as [his] property" (268, 181-183, 240, 257, 270). As Margaret Elvy notes, and as we have previously seen exemplified with Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), "education or learning is usually problematic in Hardy" while she specifies Hardy's preference for learning from experience (*Sexing* 2007, 95). Thus, a critical view of learning from books

is also detectable in the depiction of Angel, with his obvious predilection for learning from experience. In line with such an interpretation of Angel, therefore, and noting his "projective idealism" (97), Keen in *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014) describes him as "a character in an extreme condition of self-unknowing" (97), while Higonnet, in her "Introduction" to the novel (1998), stresses how the influence of Angel's reading prevents him from seeing Tess in her own right. Accordingly, Higonnet writes: "Hardy's novel presents Angel as prey to belief in the romantic plot", and comments more precisely on Hardy's characterization of Angel as someone "whose unconscious submission to social convention and romantic ideals is responsible for his misreading of Tess, believes in the romance of a virginal maid whom he awakens by kissing" (xxxiv). Like Tess, who keeps the secret of her past from him, however, Angel keeps his dream of the role he intends for Tess in his future world to himself, evidently unaware of the lack of consistency in his idealism. For, while claiming to respect Tess's right to her life because it is of equal value to his (*Tess* 1891, 214), he envisions a highly traditional, patriarchal part for her in his future life, for which he needs a woman for the "domestic labours" (223). Yet, unconsciously seeming to realize that Tess would find this vision offensive, he apparently decides to keep his ideas of their future to himself until after their marriage.

Clearly, Tess is drawn to Angel for the other-worldly air about him, conveying the sense of an inexpressible dreamworld. For though Angel is constantly observing Tess from far (208), his gaze is not of the domineering, repressive, diminutive phallic kind; rather, he appears to study her like a scientist would a rare specimen of bird or butterfly; for, with "prettiness being an inexact definition of what struck the eye in Tess" (167), and determined to solve the mystery of the force of his attraction for her, Angel comes to realize that "it was the touch of the imperfect upon the would be perfect" which fascinates, as it gives her a "humanity" (209), clearly a rare and unexpected quality for him to discover in a woman. Accordingly, as Elvy observes in *Sexing Hardy* (2007), it seems that Angel yearns for the "pure idealized body" of the Real Other (11). Tess, on her part, apparently does not experience Angel's attitude towards her as judgmental in any way, since her feeling at ease when alone with him outdoors is set against her "indoor fear" (*Tess* 1891, 179), specified as representing an experience of social sanction for her. Angel is accordingly presented as a comforting presence for Tess, on whom she gradually feels she can rely, so that in a year, the couple have developed feelings in unison with each other, "as two streams in one vale" (185). Still, here their relationship seems to have reached its highest point, with the two of them equally lost in the bliss of a threshold state of reciprocal idealization of the other (186-189, 232, 245, 257-259), living at a stage

in their involvement when, as it says, "no reflections have set in" (185). As Elvy perceives in her previously mentioned study, however, "Tess thinks she has found her double/equal in Angel but this cannot be in [the] patriarchy [she is living in]" (*Sexing* 2007, 125). Typically, when their marriage is finally to become reality, Tess inwardly wishes to remain in this state with Angel forever, "[in] perpetual betrothal" (*Tess* 1891, 266-268), while Angel, as we have seen, covets Tess "rather ideally and fancifully" (269), believing he is more unconventional than he truly is in his expectations of their future marital relationship. Nevertheless, noticeably ignorant of countryside ways, Angel is fascinated by the country girls' freedom of movement, which he regards as "unconstrained Nature and not from the abodes of Art" (236); as previously noted, Angel thus manifestly reveals how he is influenced by his reading of pastoral poetry with its view of rural innocence. Considering that Tess's natural beauty was what had drawn him to her in the first place, making him persevere in his wooing, it is particularly significant to observe Angel's sudden transformation when he sees Tess in a fine dress and jewelry, after their marriage. It is as if their marriage has affected his whole perspective on life as he is struck with awe by the physical appearance of Tess in her attire; Angel now appreciates her beauty while associating it with artistic production: "He has never 'till now estimated the artistic excellence of Tess's limbs and features" (287-288). In other words, as a married man, Angel is more fully integrated in the Symbolic order, and accordingly his perspective is shown to change towards the phallic, when, suddenly wholly out of character, he contentedly observes that, "fine feathers make fine birds" (287), as if finding the idea of Tess as a 'femme fetish' rather appealing. Fittingly, at one point, Higonnet remarks on Hardy's character portrayal in her "Introduction" (1998), therefore, "As conditions shift, so do identities" (xxvi).

Hence, apparently aware of his newly won position of power over Tess as her husband, Angel seems to take a liking to using it against her when, observing her every move and mien, he becomes generally judgmental and domineering (*Tess* 1891, 285-286). Angel's marital gaze, that is, now exhibits the sense of the all-embracing, prohibitive effect of the phallic gaze with its misreading of the real, when, unknowing of Tess's dread of the moment of her confession, he apparently misinterprets her preoccupied countenance as discontentment when blaming her for not being "cheerful enough" (284).

As it turns out, Angel proves even more integrated with the Symbolic order when he is unable to live up to his egalitarian ideals and accept Tess for who she is after her confession, in the way she accepts him after his (291-299). In other words, it is as her husband that Angel reveals his admiration of "spotlessness" and his strong aversion to "impurity" in people. Though

Angel admits he has no claim to purity himself as he confesses he is a "fallen man", while evidently expecting Tess to forgive him, and to believe his promise not to repeat it, his whole world falls apart on hearing Tess's confession of being "stained" by rape, making him resent her for it (293-299, 302). Continuing to watch her like a hawk, however, Angel is forced to recognize Tess as the Real Other in that there is something about her which he cannot fully comprehend: "She looked absolutely pure, Nature, in her fantastic trickery, had set such a seal of maidenhood upon Tess's countenance that he gazed at her with a stupefied air" (307). The situation, that is, evidently becomes perturbing for Angel, creating a state of internal conflict as he cannot help but notice how Tess is still so "throbbingly alive" and to realize that he still loves her (325).

Hence, the narrative exhibits the workings of the process of paternal abjection, revealed as an ambiguity within the realm of its Law, while relating the states of inner conflict and anguish it gives rise to in the individual, and the social marginalization it creates within a community. In other words, in a mode previously observed as typical of Hardy, Tess's naivety and the way in which she is generally presented as answerable for her condition in life implicitly convey an oblique social criticism which rather exhibits the patriarchal values resulting from paternal prohibition as the root of her problem. That being so, though Tess is presented as the abject as she is experienced by Angel, the narrative shows her as intrinsically innocent in that she is rendered accountable to the Law of the Father, which is that of patriarchy, whose precepts are exposed as working against her belief in her right to a life of equal opportunity. Such a view of the social conditions of women during the epoch of the novel is at later explicitly stated through Angel, justifying his breach of morality when, as a married man, he attempts to seduce Tess's friend the milkmaid Izz Huett, in the hope that she will agree to come with him to Brazil, so that he may fulfil the project of his dreams. Accordingly, he reflects: "Women often have to go against the Law to survive" (243). Understood from the feminist perspective of Elvy, therefore, the "obscenity of the novel" is Hardy's "offensive truth" of the feminine as the abject in the patriarchy, as always being exposed to male projections of their own faults and weaknesses (*Sexing* 2007, 123). Accordingly, as Elvy further professes when commenting on Hardy's portrayal of his major female characters, they "have to imitate the dominant (patriarchal) discourse in order to survive" (92).

Viewed in a Lacanian light, the protagonists analysed in the above, therefore, come across as iconic signs of subjects determined by the feminine structure; their portrayal, that is, displays the presence of another force in them which "says no to the phallic function", making them ex-sist, in excess of the phallic function, in relation to which, as Lacan argues, they are

not whole (Lacan *Encore* 1999, 22-33; Fink 1997, 112, 113). It is also this surplus in the characters in relation to the phallic function which, as we shall see, accounts for the force of their desire, as a quest, or a yearning, for what Lacan calls 'feminine jouissance' or 'Other jouissance' *(*Fink 1997, 115); as previously explained, this is a form of desire that seeks satisfaction in creative sublimation.

PART IV: THE 'ACHE OF MODERNISM'

Undeniably, Hardy's narrative contains an ambiguity which motivates an exploration of its communicative effects from the perspective of Kristeva's psychoanalytic semiotic theory. While there are certainly different types of ambiguity in Hardy's text, viewed in the light of Kristeva's theory, all forms of ambiguity are evidence of the trace of the semiotic disrupting the unified meaning of the Symbolic, making it at least double. Therefore, Hardy's protagonists often convey the sense of a gender ambiguity, as they are described in a way that reveals a blend of both feminine and masculine traits. Understood in the context of this project, as we shall see, the gender ambiguity of Hardy's protagonists is revelatory of the sense of creativity. Thus, we argue that it also betrays the sense of the deeper repressed processes of abjection within Hardy's writing, made apparent through its metaphoric signs; in other words, in this part we will demonstrate that the gender ambiguity in Hardy's text is indicative of the process of drive-discharges that has made his writing poetic. As poetic language, it is therefore suggestive of the conflicting forces of the semiotic and the Symbolic in the process of cathartic creative writing.

In view of the above, therefore, the second section in this part explores the manifestation of palimpsestic spaces of time in Hardy's narratives, making them suggestive of a social critique. Thus, elaborating the line of argument for Hardy's narratives being suggestive of a social critique, with special attention to the character Tess, the third section in this part exemplifies the way in which Hardy's fiction exhibits the effects of the social positioning of woman in patriarchy. Further developing the reasoning for a subtext of social critique in Hardy's fiction, the following three sections study its various pictorial manifestations in the narrative, held to be revelatory of the view associating such an insight into life with the creatively disposed. In the fifth section, passages in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) are analyzed to illustrate how the effects of living in a transitional epoch are brought to light through the narrative, with a special focus on Tess's experiences, reflections and insights. Featuring a contrastive study of the endings of the two novels *Desperate Remedies* (1871) and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), the final section in this part demonstrates the way in which the endings of both novels convey an ambiguity which undermines the possibility of a conclusive literal interpretation. This final section thus offers an intertextual, semiotic reading of the endings as they can be understood in the psychoanalytical semiotic context of Kristeva and Lacan's theories.

1. Ambiguous figures

Richard Nemesvari contends, in *Thomas Hardy, Sensationalism, and the Melodramatic Mode* (2011), that Hardy used the conventions of the sensation novel in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) to address controversial issues of sexuality and gender roles subversive of bourgeois values (27-8). Thus, Nemesvari notes the "dangerous ambiguity" in Hardy's portrayal of the characters in the novel (13), arguing that there is a sensational subtext in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) that exposes how Victorian masculine power is created and maintained by controlling both the feminine and women (*Sensationalism* 2011, 33-46). As we can see, Nemesvari's approach is essentially masculinist, focusing on demonstrating that the novel exhibits, as he writes, "how vulnerable such masculinity is during periods of cultural transition" (46). Concluding on a more ambiguous note, however, Nemesvari describes the novel as "[an] exploration of the precarious and yet oppressive nature of masculinity" (46).

Nevertheless, in the context of this project, which has to do with the creative power and the characteristics of a creative personality, as we have noted, in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) Edward is conveyed as a disillusioned poet. In *Hardy's Use of Allusion* (1983), Marlene Springer observes that Edward is continually associated with great poets throughout the novel, to make him more interesting as a suitor to Cytherea (26-7). As opposed to Cytherea, therefore, as we have previously mentioned, Edward is explicitly described as being something of an artist. Hence the description of his facial features, focusing their bisexual character, is made all the more interesting in this context, as it imparts an ambiguity with regard to his gender identity: "Although the upper part of his face and head was handsomely formed, and bounded by lines of sufficiently masculine regularity, his brows were somewhat too softly arched and finely pencilled for one of his sex" (*Desperate* 1871, 22). Conjuring up the idea of bisexual Original Man[108] expounded by Plato in *The Symposium*, with Edward being a male poet, however, his feminine side inspires an association of ideas linking the creative imagination of the poet with the feminine. Admittedly, Edward's whole being reflects an ambiguity as regards his social belonging, indicating in this manner the characteristic 'in-between' threshold state of a poet, as we have previously seen it explicated in this project. In such a perspective, Edward's face, of course, reflects his male-gender social identity, in accordance with the norms of the Symbolic order. Nevertheless, Edward's physiognomy also bears the trace of another less socially acceptable side of him; it reveals

[108] Plato, *The Symposium*. Trans. Benjamin Jowett. Retrieved Nov 30 2019 from http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/symposium.html (retrieved November 30, 2019).

the signs of the abject, betraying the trace, that is, of a nameless, disruptive excess, of contending forces within him. The disturbingly feminine aspect of Edward's face, in other words, conjures up the sense of the abject state of his being, of his liminal state, which accounts for his rebellious tendencies and his creative disposition[109].

In like manner though less explicitly so, in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Stephen's creative potential reveals itself in the highly detailed delineation of his first appearance; he is portrayed as bearing a strong resemblance to a portrait of Percy B. Shelley, the description highlighting his essentially feminine features. In contrast to the previously mentioned depiction of Knight in the same novel, the image of Stephen focuses largely on his physical traits, which are moreover likened to those of Elfride. Stephen is accordingly described as follows:

> His complexion was as fine as Elfride's own; the pink of his cheeks almost as delicate. His mouth as perfect a Cupid's bow in form, and as cherry-red in colour as hers. Bright curly hair; bright sparkling blue-grey eyes, a boy's blush and manner; neither whisker nor moustache, unless a little light-brown fur on the upper lip deserved the latter title. (*Blue Eyes* 1873, 6-7)

Later still in the narrative, Stephen's personality traits are explicitly highlighted as being of a more feminine kind when he is presented as "having a plastic adaptability more common in woman than in man" (72). In this case, however, Stephen's being associated with woman in this manner by the narrative voice, clothing his feminine features with negative connotations, represents an instance of the process of paternal abjection, due to the ambiguity of the text. The expressly stated generalizing, disparaging view of woman, in other words, is revelatory of a gender bias which resonates with the sense of abjection at the root of the social system obeying the Law of the Name of the Father. In consequence, the passage exposes a blind spot in the discourse of the social order, with its claims of a full understanding of the nature of woman, regardless of her precarious position within the social system. It

[109] Carl Gustav Jung, *Aspects of the Masculine*. Trans. R. F. C. Hull (London and New York: Routledge & Princeton University Press, 1977) 13, 23, 115-8, 121, 171. Jung maintains that an artist is never able to free him-/herself from what Jung refers to as "the anima fascination of his/her mother". As Jung explains: "it is rather a matter of incomplete detachment from the hermaphroditic archetype coupled with a distinct resistance to identify with the role of a one-sided sexual being. Such a disposition […] preserves the archetype of the Original Man, which a one-sided sexual being has, up to a point, lost." Jung is referring to Plato's idea of the bisexual Original Man in *The Symposium*, which Jung considered as a formulation for an archetype – the original duality of man. Jung considered that the archetypes gave rise to poetry and creative fantasy. According to Jung the Indian myth of Vishnu expresses the birth of creative thought from introversion.

is therefore explained that Stephen's brain "had extraordinary receptive powers, and no creativeness" (72). As it is additionally maintained: "He had not many original ideas, and yet there was scarcely an idea to which, under proper training, he could not have added a respectable co-ordinate" (72). In the perspective of a patriarchal social order here, it is assumed that creativity is a manly attribute. Nevertheless, this self-same passage reveals an insight into the implications of social change for our sense of identity. The sense of such an insight, however, transfuses the narrative when Stephen is presented as prototypical of the modern era, with a constitution which, "rare in the springtime of civilization, seems to grow abundant as a nation gets older, individuality fades, and education spreads" (72). Thereupon, when Stephen is denigrated and referred to as an "upstart" (66) by Mr Swancourt on discovering the truth of Stephen's modest origins, it reveals the precarity of Stephen's social position, as it suggests his indefinable status within the social order. Stephen's indefinable status, however, also imparts the sense of an in-between, threshold state of ex-sistence, which, as we have previously seen, is the subject position which characterizes the creative personality. Permeated with the sense of Stephen's state of ex-sistence, therefore, the narrative awakens an association of ideas connecting Stephen's situation in life with that of an artist, for in his social ambitions Stephen seems to be propelled by desire for a sense of wholeness within the emerging social structure. Typical of a Hardy protagonist, Stephen's situation of not-belonging thus implicitly imparts the idea of him as living the state of ex-sistence of an artist. In other words, the narrative is transfused with the sense of Stephen having an insight into life equivalent to that of an artist, as he is shown to suffer from the consequences of living in a transitional epoch.

Thus, the fact that Stephen realizes he is suffering from a social condition, and even strives to change his prospects by going to London to secure his education the way he does, conveys the sense of his creative streak. Another hint of Stephen's creative potential is the description of his father, the mason Mr Smith, whose essentially creative trait is explicitly stated. Mr. Smith, however, is rendered secure in his social identity due to his age and a long experience of his trade, which protect him from the negative impact of social change. Though evidently of a creative personality, Mr Smith belongs to an epoch during which his creativity was given an outlet and valorized within the social order as craftsmanship. Like most craftsmen of his generation, therefore, "he had too much individuality to be a typical 'working-man'." As we see, Hardy's narrative is evidently transfused with the sense of an insight into life, revealing the individual as a subject in process; such individuals are shown to suffer from paternal prohibition or epochs of rapid social change. Hence, the effect on the individual of the transition from an

agricultural to an industrial society is imparted through the narrative by way of Mr. Smith complaining that life in large towns "metamorphoses the unit 'Self' into a fraction of the unit 'Class'" (68). For, as a living remnant of an agricultural epoch, Mr Smith is described as being "much more the artist" in comparison to his kind in the larger towns. As previously mentioned in the analysis of the spire scene in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), to use creative sublimation as giving rise to catharsis in support of the power structure of the social system was integral to the pre-capitalist socio-symbolic order. The characterization of Mr Smith as being more of an artist thus suggests his creative bent, with the further implications, therefore, that Stephen shares his artistic traits, whether inherited or acquired by family upbringing.

In *Desperate Remedies* (1871), Miss Aldclyffe, like the characters mentioned above, has both feminine and masculine facial features. According to Nemesvari in his previously mentioned study of the novel, Hardy uses the conventions of sensation fiction to explore controversial gender issues and probe traditional bourgeois values (*Sensationalism* 2011, 8-9). With a focus on analyzing the novel in terms of its exploration of Victorian anxieties about masculinity provoked by the rise of capitalism, Nemesvari observes that "the novel explores the difficulty men face in constructing a secure identity in a burgeoning capitalist culture", where social status based on birth and ancestry was in decline (*Sensationalism* 28-9). Hence, with capitalism bringing about the loss of traditional Victorian values and inducing social mobility, as Nemesvari points out, "women were unilaterally redefining themselves and thereby the relations of both sexes" (29). Nemesvari thus exemplifies various instances of "gender transgression" (79) in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), which depict apparently androgynous characters. Scrutinizing Hardy's portraiture of Miss Aldclyffe, with her combined feminine and masculine features, Nemesvari thus explores her forbidding appearance in the light of her ambiguity: "Almost as threatening as (and perhaps more threatening than) the unmanly man was the unwomanly woman [at a time when] many men harbored […] a crisis of masculinity" (*Sensationalism* 2011, 29). In the context of my project, however, analyzing the novel as revelatory of the creative feminine power prohibited through the paternal function within the social order, as previously noted, the feminine features of the male characters conjure up the sense of their artistic potential. In contrast, the masculine side of Miss Aldclyffe is suggestive of her social position as a figure of authority in the paternal symbolic realm. Interestingly, therefore, as opposed to Edward's feminine features, which are conveyed as disturbing signs of the abject, as previously explicated in terms of Kristeva's semiotic theory, Miss Aldclyffe's masculine cast is portrayed in a rather more positive light:

> She had clear steady eyes, a Roman nose in its purest form, and also the round prominent chin with which the Caesars are represented in ancient marbles: a mouth expressing a capacity for and tendency to strong emotion, habitually controlled by pride. There was a severity about the lower outlines of the face which gave a masculine cast to this portion of the countenance. Womanly weakness was nowhere visible save in one part – the curve of her forehead and brows; there it was clear and emphatic. (*Desperate* 1971, 43)

From a feminist perspective, however, the androgynous features of Miss Aldclyffe are suggestive of patriarchal oppression, where the predominantly masculine illustrates the condition of woman as a paternal metaphor in a phallic social order. As we have previously seen, in psychoanalytic theory the development of female subjectivity within the paternal social order is risky and complicated. In a phallic representational economy, that is, the definition of woman, like an eclipse, reduces the truly feminine to insignificance. Unlike the bisexual character of Edward's countenance, whose feminine features, although conveyed as disturbing, nevertheless suggest the positive sense of creativity, the feminine in Miss Aldclyffe appears to be residual, with her whole countenance communicating the sense of the overpowering value of the masculine. The portrayal of Miss Aldclyffe, that is, appears as an iconic projection of the definition of woman within a social order based on the paternal Law. As with the other characters analyzed in the above, however, the residual feminine in Miss Aldclyffe appears to signal her creative potential. Nevertheless, as we shall see, living in denial of the repressed feminine within her, it forcefully makes itself felt in her as a disruptive, destructive force.

Another character in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) depicted with androgynous features is Miss Aldclyffe's illegitimate son, Manston; as Nemesvari comments in his study of the novel, "he is a gender-reversed version of [his mother]. Moreover, David Bull notes that "the detailed description of his beauty emphasizes its feminine qualities" (*Sensationalism* 2011, 42). As previously noted with the portrayal of Stephen, therefore, with Manston's portrayal the narrative operates in the characteristic manner of Hardy's depiction of his female characters; in other words, the narrative perspective is seemingly third-person objective, although like an obtrusive camera, zooming in on their facial features in what is often described by critics as an inappropriately prying manner (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 136, 156, 172). Hence, the focal point in the portraiture of Manston is the highly erogenous zone of his lips: "These were full and luscious to a surprising degree, possessing a woman-like softness of curve, and a ruby redness so intense as to testify strongly to much susceptibility of heart where feminine beauty was

concerned" (*Desperate* 1871, 127-8). As Nemesvari points out, however, Manston is presented as a "dangerous union of womanly sensuality with manly aggressiveness" (*Sensationalism* 2011, 43), for, as it says in the novel, he is "a very bad form of man – as bad as it is rare" (*Desperate* 1871, 109). Nemesvari thus interprets the portraiture of Manston's problematic masculinity as revelatory of men's sense of losing their bearings, with, as he writes, "a growing sense that masculine and feminine were becoming dangerously confused" when women were beginning to redefine themselves in the burgeoning system of capitalism (*Sensationalism* 2011, 29). Clearly, Nemesvari notices how Manston is used to represent the force of abjection within the paternal Symbolic order. Being the son of Miss Aldclyffe, therefore, when considered in the context of this project, Manston's androgynous streak is indicative of his sharing his mother's creative potential. Like his mother, however, being an integral part of the social order obeying the Law of the Name of the Father, Manston is living in a state of extreme repression of his desire for maternal jouissance. For, evidently like Alec in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), and Eustacia and Wildeve in *The Return of the Native* (1876), Manston is living "in excess"; he is characterized, that is, as essentially abject*,* in that he is described as a man of "superabundant vitality", which, when interpreted in terms of Kristeva and Lacan's theories, is suggestive of his living in a state of inadequate repression, with his surplus desire propelling him in a never ending quest for the idealized memory of a lost sense of plenitude. As Nemesvari further notes, Manson's sexuality "is essentially narcissistic" (*Sensationalism* 2011, 44), and his "masculinity is unsublimated" (45), so that like the characters he is likened to in the above, Manston is incapable of developing a loving relationship with anyone.

In the much later novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), the characters Angel and Tess, like typical Hardy lovers, appear to be two of a kind, caught in a relationship which seems more of a non-relationship, as they apparently gravitate towards each other, like two planets in orbit, in a hopeless desire to merge with the Imaginary intuited in the other. As previously observed, Tess is given to reflect on the nature of their attraction for each other as their "strangeness" (189), an epithet which transposes well into what Kristeva today defines as their "singularity"[110], in the sense that neither seems to be an integral part of their surroundings. We have already observed the distinctive ethereal, surplus quality in Tess, noted by Angel through the third person

[110] The term is used in the context of Medical Humanities, which developed in response to the challenges of cultural crossings which modern medicine is confronted with. Thus, the conventional distinction between the 'objectivity of science' and the 'subjectivity of culture' was questioned by Julia Kristeva, inspiring an "approach to the human body as a complex biocultural fact". As used in this context, a 'singularity' is that which does not fully conform to standard notions. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5869466/#R13 (retrieved November 6, 2019).

omniscient narrative voice. Likewise, the other-worldly in Angel is reflected in his features as a bisexual quality, with especially his mouth being dwelt upon by the narrator, and with his eyes, "fixed" and "abstracted", giving him "something nebulous, preoccupied, vague in his bearing" (169).

2. Palimpsestic spaces of time

We have previously demonstrated how the portrayal of Tess in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) arguably evokes the idea of her as inherently artistic. As we have noticed, Tess is subject to eerie visionary states of near prophetic insight that propel her away from accepting her lot in life as a woman; strongly determined to preserve her integrity, therefore, she is shown to resist the idea of a marriage of convenience for the sake of propriety (204). To a certain extent, the root of Tess's problem lies in the discrepancy between her aspirations and potential and what life has to offer. As Margaret Elvy argues in *Sexing Hardy* (2007), "there is more to her than the narrator lets on" (104), in support of her claim that *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is "a novel of anger […] against time, God, industrialization and social institutions such as marriage, Christianity, the Church, law and education" (207). If such a view is frequently noted reproachingly by Hardy critics as pessimism[111], however, when understood at a meta-narrative level its j'ouis-sense is suggestive of hope. For, as we shall see, Tess can be interpreted as an iconic projection of the role of woman through time, thus conveying a sense of the past, present and future all in one. When, for instance, Tess is shown as taking on the role of a priestess to baptize her dying illegitimate child in the hope of securing it a regular funeral and grave, her naivety on taking the Law of the Father into her own hands might strike many a reader as a mockery of her pathetic presumption. As Higonnet remarks in her previously mentioned "Introduction" (1998), however, the baptism scene was one of the censored passages in the serial publication of the novel, which Hardy was to reintegrate into the fifth edition of the book. Thus, according to Higonnet, "When Hardy restored the 'true sequence of things', the defenders of Tess's purity could experience the powerful chain of images" supporting their view of her as a victim (xxi). In the "Introduction" to the Penguin Classics edition (1978), Alvarez emphasizes the "power and beauty of the heroine" in this passage, revelatory of Hardy's great involvement with Tess when writing the novel, so much so, as Alvarez writes, that he "seems to forget that Tess is a character in his own fiction" (22). As Alvarez further comments, "Tess, baptizing her dying baby, suddenly ceases to be a mere country girl and becomes a looming,

[111] Dale Kramer, *A Cambridge Companion to Hardy*. Ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1999), and Margaret Hugonnet, "Introduction," 1998, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (London: Penguin, 1998) xix-xxxix. Numerous such references are exemplified in these studies.

mysterious, tragic figure" (22). In my view, however, the depiction of Tess acting out a ceremony of baptism appears anything but tragic. For she is utterly convincing in her role as a priestess, seemingly at one with herself, in total identification with the position of power it implies, a position of power non-existent for such as Tess within the social order to which she belongs. As it is portrayed in the novel: "The ecstasy of faith almost apotheosized her; it set upon her face a glowing irradiation […] The children gazed up at her with more and more reverence, and no longer had a will of questioning. She did not look like Sissy to them now, but as a being large, towering and awful – a divine personage with which they had nothing in common" (*Tess* 1891, 145-6). Understood at a meta-narrative level, therefore, Tess here, seemingly reconciled with her inner sense of self, can be read figuratively as conveying the sense of the historical past, of the long-lost social order of prehistoric Celtic Britain, where women were an integral part of the power structure as Druidesses or Priestesses[112]. In this manner, Tess's baptism ceremony inspires an association of ideas suggestive of a sense of optimism, for if an egalitarian society has existed in the past, there is hope for the future that such a society may develop again.

Accordingly, the depiction of Tess contemplating the scenery when she is in despair because Angel has left for Brazil can be interpreted like the baptism scene as a highly symbolic passage of palimpsestic time. Shown as being struck by the strange beauty of some migrating birds which have begun arriving from somewhere behind the North-Pole, Tess is awed by the otherworldliness of these "gaunt spectral creatures with tragical eyes" (297), like ancient creatures of a past she seems to glimpse reflected in their eyes, conveying an eerie sense of potential malevolence (363), "eyes which had witnessed scenes of cataclysmic horror in inaccessible polar regions of a magnitude such as no human being had ever conceived" (363). As Courtney Bush notes in her study "Birds in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" (2012)[113], Tess is often identified with birds in the novel (*Tess* 1891, 178, 179, 260, 261, 28); as Bush interprets it "The imagery of birds is seen throughout the novel in comparison to [Tess's] past and innocence [; they thus] represent the pain and confusion [she] feels in her life and along her journey." Bush's focus on the comparison of the birds with Tess's situation, however, also supports the interpretation of the passage here argued for, touching on its sense of being a time transcending experience, with the birds understood as palimpsestic of the past, present and future all in one. As Bush explains about the birds, they

[112] On Celtic culture see https://www.druidry.org/search/node/female%20druids (retriev November 6, 2019).
[113] Courtney Bush, "Birds in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" (Prezi, Dec 17 2012). https://prezi.com/5zfynvtbddbb/birds-in-tess-of-the-durbervilles/ (retrieved November 7, 2019).

"go to beautiful places but represent a bad place where they are victims of natural violence". The portrayal of the birds thus inspires the view of them as emanating the sense of a threshold state of ex-sistence in time. Considered at a meta-narrative level, that is, the implicit comparison of the birds with Tess encourages the idea of the birds as an iconic projection of the textual function of Tess within the narrative. The textual function of Tess, that is, can be seen as a figurative, palimpsestic representation of the position of woman through time within the Symbolic order. As we shall see, understood at a meta-narrative level, the textual function of Tess here also appears to be a representation of the timeless maternal space, of the disruptive semiotic which nourishes the text.

Reinforcing a reading of Tess as a palimpsestic representation of the position of woman through time, the ending of the novel, which takes place at Stonehenge, certainly awakens the sense of nostalgia for what is lacking within the Symbolic order of which Tess is a part; it implicitly conveys a critique of the social order Tess is living in, which does not allow her the identificatory sublimation of the (m)Other she needs, to be integral to its power structure. Tess, lying in wait on the sacrificial stone, to be taken in by the officers for her death sentence, thus reifies society as founded on a process of abjection of what it cannot contain; it is a metaphor revelatory of Tess's poet's insight into the social order as built on the sacrifice of the potentially disruptive force of its excess. Over and above all, however, with Stonehenge being a relic of an egalitarian social order, what is suggested at a meta-narrative level is the hint of a hope, of a future social order, founded on a more inclusive identificatory sublimation of the (m)Other.

Regarding Tess's eerie foreboding of the tragic outcome of her life, therefore, the passage that relates her collision with the morning mailcart when driving her family's beehives to the market is highly evocative, and clearly heavily laden with symbolic meaning. Tess's father's horse, the family horse, is called Prince, and he is killed by a pointed shaft entering his chest, like a stabbing. In attempting to prevent the horse from bleeding to death, Tess "became splashed from face to skirt" with blood, after which she only "stood helplessly looking on" (*Tess* 1891, 71). Interestingly Tess feels guilty for the death of the horse, yet "Nobody blamed Tess as she blamed herself" (73), and henceforth "she regarded herself in the light of a murderess" (73). It is as if the whole occurrence is laden with the significance of what awaits in her life; it is as if she feels the impact of what is yet to come, like the dress rehearsal of her future, when the process of abjection will reveal itself and make her bloodstained and abject for real, within the social order under the Law of the Name of the Father. At a meta-narrative level, therefore, the portrayal of Tess the murderess is revelatory of the trace of the disruptive

semiotic in the narrative, signifying the author's purification of the threatening drive force of the abject within him, through the process of creative sublimation in writing.

All the more interesting, because ambiguous, therefore, is the fairytale-like portrayal of Alec's arrival, when, as her employer, he comes to fetch her to his property, in a "highly varnished and equipped" gig, specified as "not a humble conveyance" (92), for it is highly suggestive of the prince in *Cinderella*, coming to save his love from a life of drudgery. This portrayal of Alec is rendered still more ambiguous when considered in the light of the previous description of the tragic fate of the family horse, Prince, whose accidental death, as we have seen, leaves Tess bloodstained and feeling guilty, like a murderess; for the fairytale-like passage with Alec, superimposed against the horse scene, creates a palimpsestic time effect which contributes to the formation of expectations in the reader of anything but a happy ending. In this manner, and characteristic of Hardy, the narrative exhibits the philosophical Platonic sense of the discrepancy between appearance and reality. What is also intertextually conveyed is the idea of the impact of culture, custom and tradition as an all-embracing force which also controls the individual internally. As Keen remarks in her study of the influences on Hardy, he "regarded most men as sleepwalkers in their own lives, unaware of their actions" (*Hardy's Brains* 2014*,* 35). Accordingly, as Keen observes in *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014), Hardy wrote in his "Facts" Notebook, under the heading "Intoxication of Ideas", "Men can intoxicate themselves with ideas as effectually as with alcohol […] and produce, by dint of intense thinking, mental conditions hardly distinguishable from monomania" (35)

The ambiguous foreshadowing of a fairy tale "so they lived happily ever after" ending to the story, thus emerges as a play of shadows. Alhough, as we have observed, the mismatch of the couple Alec and Tess in a forest calls forth associations with Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600), the expected happy ending of a restoration of the natural order is not realized. In this manner, the real life, shadow version of the fairy tale or romantic comedy love story, which is that of the novel, has the effect of shattering the dream of the rescuing Prince, which the fairy tale or romantic comedy love story feeds its readers with, as mere illusion. A calculating seducer or Don Juan, rather than the ideal Prince of an everlasting love, Alec, it is said, takes pleasure in seducing young inexperienced girls for the mere satisfaction of making them fall; that is, Alec enjoys the chase, for its own sake (*Tess* 1891, 82-83). On this account, perhaps, the forest where Alec takes sexual advantage of Tess being called the Chase is laden with the symbolic meaning suggestive of an implicit warning to inexperienced female readers. As previously mentioned, when discussing Hardy's anti-Realist stand, however, he

was totally against writing didactic novels of moral instruction; accordingly, the hint of a warning detectable here does not come across as moralistic, and in any case, it might not have been consciously made. As previously noted, in her "Introduction" (1998) to the novel, Margaret Higonnet suggests such a view of Hardy's tendency to rearrange and turn conventional plots into "grotesque inversions" of them, when she comments that such "caricatures" of traditional motifs "may not have been conscious" (xxxiii).

For, before the crucial turn of events in Tess's life, the narrative repeatedly lays stress upon Tess's innocence, revealing how she is driven by circumstance and family expectations into the trap of her future (*Tess* 1891, 81-88). Nevertheless, there is an ambiguity in the portrayal of Tess's innocence[114], in that her conscience is stained with guilt over something for which she is neither blamed nor condemned by anyone, while she is evidently totally oblivious to what woman is usually blamed for being all too aware of, namely the force of attraction of her feminine physical attributes on the opposite sex (81). As we learn when Tess gives in and allows her mother to help her dress to her advantage when she is to meet Alec d'Urberville for the first time, Tess seems more of a woman than she is (*Tess* 1891, 89). In this it appears that Tess is all innocence (91); yet she has apparently already integrated the sense of the process of abjection within the paternal realm of the social order of patriarchy, with its meagre conditions for the personal development for women. Hence, unwittingly, Tess feels abject, while reticently accepting that she will become what is expected of her, that is, a mere ornamental figurine, to be admired for her beauty only, like a picture (91), with her face as her "trump-card" (93).

As we have argued, however, Tess is not of the passively unquestioning kind, readily accepting the curtailment of her personal freedom. Manifestly of the creative artistic type, as previously noted, Tess is subject to states of reverie and inexpressible diffuse longings for something vaguely felt as lost, yet which prevents her from accepting the terms of what life has to offer. In other words, not wholly integrated within the Symbolic order, Tess feels self-estranged, both as an educated woman living in a transitional age, and as an inherently rebellious, because potentially creative individual. The ambiguity in the portrayal of Tess as "all innocence" (91), yet feeling blood-stained and guilty, as argued above, hence makes her a perfect illustration in the narrative of the process of paternal abjection of the truly feminine. As Higonnet observes in her "Introduction" (1998), Tess is shown to attract

[114] Margaret Higonnet, "Introduction," *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (London: Penguin, 1998) xxviii. Commenting on the narrative ambiguity, Higonnet writes: "the narrative tension between differentiation and generalization has provoked theoretical speculation about the significance of contradictions in the narrative voice" (xxvii). As Higonnet further speculates, "is there a mosaic of voices each of which adapts to the local needs of a passage?"

"contradictory and deceptive readings […] not only from Angel and Alec but also from the narrator, who refutes yet reimposes 'men's language' as a measure of her identity" (xxv). Commenting further in this fashion, Higonnet writes: "One of Hardy's master themes, then, is the questioning of stereotypes, classifications and conventions that dictate interpretations of human character" (xxv). Indeed, prior to the pivotal event in the Chase, the narrative voice emphasizes that, locally, Tess was considered a responsible person, much admired for being good at school (*Tess* 1891, 75). Nonetheless, having been forced to take on the role of a parent, not only to her siblings, but to her mother and father as well (56-68), has made Tess a very inexperienced and self-willed young woman beyond the closed circle of her family life. Clearly not fully integrated into the social world she is expected to adapt to, therefore, she is strongly reticent about playing the part expected of her; as we have seen, it is only because of her guilty conscience that she agrees to do so. Critical of the world she is forced to live in, Tess is shown to have mixed feelings (81). Evidently embarrassed about having to act on behalf of her family to "claim kin" with the d'Urbervilles (80), she apparently does not fully understand her reluctance herself; however, as she is shown to question her intuitive aversion to Alec – "Indeed, I don't quite know why", she says" (86) –Tess's intuition of Alec as a threat is nevertheless revealed as justified by the narrative voice, which comments that "[Tess was] coveted that day by the wrong man" (83).

As we have seen, therefore, Hardy held tradition to be mainly a source of prejudice and oppression, regarding it as a great hindrance to human development. In this regard, highlighting Hardy's resistance to the mode of Realism in her essay "The radical aesthetic in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" (1999), Linda Shires perceives how Hardy's narrative mode "undermine[s] the bases of mimetic representation" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 148).Thus, Shires further explains that Hardy "is not content to dwell on the triad of fall, punishment, and redemption" (150). According to Shires, he rather "challenges our narrator-like sentimental and patriarchal 'wishfulness' by showing that a violated woman cannot 'get over' her ordeals, as if she were just putting on new clothes" (150). As argued in the above, although an aversion to custom and tradition, as strong forces of social repression subtly holding back the potential of individual growth, is noticeable in much of Hardy's writing, it is in truth certainly exemplified in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891). On this account the character Tess can be understood as an iconic projection of the effects of the Law of the Father on the individual whose longings exceed its bounds; thus, the narrative is revelatory of the process of abjection on which the paternal Symbolic order feeds. Shown to be entirely responsible for what happened in the Chase (*Tess* 1891, 130), therefore, Tess is then giv-

en to make matters worse by refusing to satisfy the customary expectation to remedy the situation by marrying the man. Although the blame is put entirely on her, as she is reproached by her mother – "You ought to have been more careful if you didn't mean to get him to make you his wife!" (130) – and having wholly integrated this view of herself as part of her self-image, "[looking] upon herself as a figure of Guilt" (135), a different opinion of Tess is, however, conveyed by the narrative voice. Clearly, the view of Tess as a "figure of Guilt" is rather revelatory of the process of paternal abjection at the heart of the Symbolic order of patriarchy. As we have observed, whilst having a formal education, Tess grew up in a milieu of folklore and orally transmitted ballads, whose patriarchal values are evidently revealed through the portrayal of the ways, expectations and expressed opinions of the characters (60-61). Hence, as it is described: "Like all cottagers in Blackmoor Valley, Tess was steeped in fancies and prefigurative superstitions" (84).

As previously observed, however, Tess is not entirely in agreement with the terms of the patriarchal social order she is living in, since she is apparently unwilling to accept what is expected of her. In this manner, an ambiguity in the narrative can be interpreted as exhibiting Tess's artist's threshold condition of partly belonging; it can be understood as revelatory of her state of ex-sistence as explicated by Lacan. Indisputably, Tess's fierce resistance to Alec is purely intuitive and subjective; she simply abhors him for reasons she cannot explain, because she does not understand them herself. While her aversion to Alec is of a kind that makes the prospects of a marriage impossible, however, Tess is still shown as feeling guilty about it all (98-99). As Higonnet reflects in her "Introduction" to the novel (1998): "Fractured and reordered, these motifs [of traditional romance] fracture the conventional pattern of female suffering and redemption" (xxxiii), while Margaret Elvy, in *Sexing Hardy* (2007), maintains that the novel is "'traditional' and follows patriarchal codes and morals. Yet it also questions them and offers a number of feminist critiques of late 19th Century society" (22).

Tess is manifestly held to know nothing of the unwritten rules of high society, as she has not been trained in how to act like a lady, in the way expected of young female members of the upper class. As previously mentioned, Tess is well aware of her lack, as she laments her unfamiliarity with relational matters, owing to her not having read novels. Evidently unprepared for how to ward off Alec's insistent advances, therefore, and being short-tempered to boot, Tess is shown as being unable to contain herself when attempting to avert Alec's persistent behavior (*Tess* 1891, 95); in this manner Tess unknowingly vexes Alec (97), merely by allowing the force of her abjection of the paternal from within to invade her whole being, in defense against Alec, as if he were a death threat. In this way, as Elvy com-

ments on Hardy's novels, "[they] so graphically explore the desire and the prohibition, the lust for life and the laws that come down like walls of steel around the soul" (*Sexing* 2007, 64).

3. Traces of the process of abjection

The portrayal of Tess's part in the story of her tragedy is certainly ambiguous, as we have noticed. Without question, Tess is described as suffering from the consequences of her aberrant behavior, which is shown to lead her to further withdraw into herself, thus increasing her social isolation and feeling of non-belonging. Nevertheless, although the narrative does not actually condone Tess's behavior, there is no clear-cut moral condemnation of it either; there is, rather, a sympathy for her rebellious intransigence and her general situation in life. Hence, Tess is described as enjoying her own company when going out for walks, for "it was then, out in the woods, that she seemed least solitary" (*Tess* 1891, 134). Interestingly, suggestive of Tess's sense of not-belonging and indicative of her awareness of the state of ex-sistence, which is characteristic of the potentially creative, Tess feels most at ease at dusk: "She knew how to hit to a hair's-breadth that moment of evening when the light and the darkness are so evenly balanced that the constraint of day and the suspense of night neutralize each other, leaving absolute mental liberty" (134). At one with the scenery, Tess apparently does not suffer from her social isolation. Instead, Tess's social isolation seems to have the effect of transporting her into states of internal contemplation, helping her put life into perspective. Inspiring associations with the idea of a Romantic Poet in communion with nature, therefore, the portrayal of Tess suggests the idea of her characteristics of a Poet, of having the insight about living in a world of shadows. Thus, "She had no fear of the shadows. […] for the world is only a psychological phenomenon, and what they seemed they were" (134).

Expressed in Kristeva's psychoanalytic terms, Tess's intrinsic rebelliousness is a sign of her creative potential resulting from her mother-identifying subject position. Exhibiting the harsh conditions of living the in-between state of an artist, Tess nevertheless reveals the insight into life that it gives her. Tess's threshold subject position, propelling her away from paternal prohibition, in her desire for the pre-Oedipal maternal space, gives her the insight into the process of paternal abjection within the Symbolic order; in the terms of Lacan, Tess's subject position gives her a sensory awareness of the phallic function, making her more acutely sense her state of ex-sistence as a woman within the phallic structure of a patriarchal social order.

Characteristically, therefore, Tess is shown to reject the idea of God as severe and condemning, when she contemptuously answers the stranger con-

fronting her with such a view: "I don't believe God said such things" (129). For certainly, with experience, Tess's idea of God has become vague and diffuse, appearing in her mind rather as "some vague ethical being whom she could not class definitely as the God of her childhood, and could not comprehend as any other" (135). On the one hand, Tess feels sure of her innocence. Simply unable to go against herself, she has followed the conviction of her right to be true to herself. Nevertheless, apparently having integrated the patriarchal viewpoint of the Symbolic order she belongs to, during her lonely walks when she is surrounded by nature only, "she looked upon herself as a figure of Guilt intruding into the haunts of innocence" (135). Less judgmental, however, the narrative voice clearly takes a stand in support of Tess, pleading her innocence: "But all the while she was making a distinction where there was no difference. Feeling herself in antagonism she was quite in accord. She had been made to break an accepted social law, but no law known to the environment in which she fancied herself an anomaly" (135).

In this manner, Tess's state of ex-sistence within the phallic structure reveals itself in her ambivalent feelings about her responsibility for the situation she is in; as we have seen, she is torn between the two feelings of guilt and innocence. Hence, Tess feels innocent in that, evidently for her, resisting Alec was a matter of life and death. Accepting the terms of such a marriage, with all its implications of a life in accordance with the Law of the Father, would be equivalent for her to agreeing to commit suicide. Nevertheless, as we have seen, with Tess's subject position being partially within the phallic Symbolic order, she is also under the influence of the Law of the Father, which, although she is in opposition to it, has become an integral part of her. Paternal abjection working from within Tess as her 'conscience', and the social conditions of the Victorian era she is living in, thus prove to be too strong a preventive force for Tess to go against as she is made to look upon herself "as a figure of Guilt". Nevertheless, the obvious ambiguity in the portrayal of the actions and character of Tess is revelatory of the disruptive semiotic working through the narrative, which, by exhibiting the process of abjection which nourishes it, makes its meaning at least double.

However, in this case unmistakably taking a stand for Tess's innocence, the narrative voice sets her innocence against the Law of the Father by evoking the idea of the ruling principle of the Law as being made by man, at the service of the social system of patriarchy. As a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) reads: "Man manufactured artificial morality, made sins of things that were clean in themselves as the pairing of birds on the wing, crushed nature, robbed it of its beauty & meaning, & established a system that means war, and always war, because it is a struggle between the instinctive truths and cultivated lies" (Vol. 2, 61).

Regarding the tragic outcome of Tess's life, therefore, it is interesting to note how references to comedy and tragedy appear intermittently throughout the novel, where they are set in relation to each other and conveyed as relative. In this, as Jakob Lohte remarks in his essay "Variants on genre" (1999), Hardy adheres to a literary tradition of the Ancient Greeks, or, as he expresses it: "This kind of interplay of tragic and comic features conforms to a tradition which goes right back to Aristophanes some of whose comedies have been seen as inversions of Euripides' tragedies" (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 122). Commenting on the noted interplay of tragic and comic elements in *Tess* in particular, Higonnet quotes a reflection on this from Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (1985) in her "Introduction" (1998): "If you look beneath the surface of any farce you see a tragedy; and on the contrary, if you blind yourself to the deeper issues of a tragedy, you see a farce" (xxxvi). Higonnet, however, sets Hardy's interplay of the tragic and the comic against a Shakespearian tradition: "Participating in a Shakespearian tradition that sets high romance against the farce of clowns, such ruptures become naturalized as one aspect of tragic irony" (xxxiii). For instance, at the dairy farm, when dairyman Crick tells a story of seduction gone wrong, meant to be appreciated as humorous, Tess, having personal experience of enforced seduction and deceit, empathizes with the plight of the deceived woman; therefore, Tess considers Crick's anecdote rather as a tragedy: "none of [the listeners] but [Tess] seemed to see the sorrow of it; to a certainty, not one knew how cruelly it touched the tender place in her experience" (*Tess* 1891, 190). When the story is later taken up by Crick again, eager to add its latest development as "heard news o' this morning" (243), it is once again to the general mirth of all the listeners except Tess, who is deeply affected by the story, all the more so because of the general amusement it arouses. As Tess is shown to reflect: "What was comedy to them was tragedy to her; and she could hardly bear the mirth" (244). For the story concerned a woman who had withheld vital information about herself from her lover for fear of jeopardizing their marriage. Reflecting on her own highly emotional response to the story, at cross purposes with the other listeners, Tess reconciles herself with her reaction as she observes: "Yes, there was the pain of it: This question of a woman telling her story – the heaviest of crosses to herself – seemed just amusement to others. It was as if people should laugh at martyrdom" (245).

Also pertaining to tragedy is Angel's hedonism, for his conviction of having achieved total intellectual freedom in his rejection of Tradition makes his transformation on hearing Tess's confession of having lost her innocence all the more interesting. Following Tess's confession, the whole atmosphere of the room metamorphoses from paradisiacal bliss into Mephistophelian darkness, therefore, metaphorically conveying the process of paternal abjec-

tion in Angel, who is thus revealed as just as dogmatic as his father: "[his] hard logical deposit like a vein of metal in a soft loom [….] blocked the acceptance of Tess" (318). Noting Hardy's use of dramatic irony in his character portrayal of Angel, Keen describes Angel in terms of his "projective idealism" (*Hardy's Brains* 2014, 97), while, in her "Introduction" (1998) Higonnet, perceiving "[Angel's] more general difficulties of self-definition and understanding of the world" (xxxv) and his "unconscious submission to social convention and romantic ideals" (xxxiv), asserts that Angel "remains the prisoner of gender and class assumptions" (xxvi). However, for Linda Shires, in her previously mentioned essay (1999), the delineation of Angel as a "half-frozen and stylized [artefact]" contrasts with how 'survivors' of Victorian novels are usually portrayed (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 158). Accordingly, Shires explains that, as a character, Angel is "both more diminished and more elevated by analogy but elevated into art rather than life" (158). In this passage of the novel, therefore, with Angel appearing like the Devil incarnate to Tess, his mockery of her coming across as an eerie "laugh in hell" (*Tess* 1891, 298), with the narrative voice emphasizing the "shadow of [Tess's] shape on the wall", thus conveying her transformation into the abject to Angel, with the sparkle of her jewelry likened to "a sinister wink of a toad", suggesting the idea of her as a witch (293), the whole passage, in a very Shakespearian manner, evidently plays on the theme of the real versus appearances. Hence, what Tess is shown to believe is anger, and even hatred, in Angel, is revealed by the narrative voice as being sorrow (300-1), while Angel's condemnatory reactions are equally challenged by a narrative focus on Tess's total bewilderment and despair, as signs of her inherent purity (297-9). Thus, when Angel blames Tess for not living up to his idea of her, for being Other, or, as he says, "the woman I have been loving is not you" (299), Tess corrects him by adding, "in your shape" (299). Since Angel's confession of being "a fallen man" (292) has made no difference to Tess, for, as she says, she loves him, "in all changes, because you are yourself" (298), and "I thought you loved me – me, my very self." (298), Tess cannot understand Angel's intransigence, that it is not a matter of forgiveness (298). Indeed, the nightmarish situation of the characters losing their bearings when they discover the truth, that what they believed to be the real was but a wild dream, a world of shadows, of mere appearances, has the quality of material of a Shakespeare tragedy. As Angel's reaction is explained by the narrative voice: "the essence of things had changed" (297).

Evidently at the root of the conflict, therefore, are Angel's inner contradictions, which are made more apparent as the world he has built his new identity on is demolished by a flash of truth. For, since he had truly believed he had freed his mind from the Law of the Father of his upbringing, Tess's

confession forces him to confront the truth of his own failure. It is thus Angel's resistance to accepting the blind spot in himself which makes him turn so violently against Tess, for he feels humiliated, as "his vision [has found itself] mocked by appearances." (312). Nevertheless, unable to understand Angel's former idealizing, romantic, patronizing and highly patriarchal view of her, almost as a specimen of "rustic innocence" (308) which he had dreamt of securing, Tess reveals the more rugged truth of country folk ways as she defends herself by saying that there are many like her (303).

What is at stake here is evidently a clash of values; it seems the result of the couple's belonging to two different social orders, with Angel as a rebellious son of a parson, well-read but inexperienced, and Tess very much a country girl, brought up with country ways. Although patriarchal in their own way, the morals of lower-class country folk nonetheless seem less strict for women than Angel is prepared to see. His dogmatism thus exhibits the process of paternal abjection of the Real Other, here symbolically imparted through Tess's secret; in this manner, Tess's loss of innocence appears an iconic projection of the truly feminine as abject within the phallic function. Angel's attitude towards Tess certainly conveys this when he disparagingly challenges her by reducing her experience of living a tragedy to practically nothing; it is like a joke to the rest of the world, he tells her: "this kind of case, […] is rather one for satirical laughter than for tragedy" (303).

With the narrative redolent of a Shakespeare tragedy, however, Angel's belittling of it all comes across as highly ambiguous. Once again, the genres of tragedy and comedy are reflected upon in the novel, and apparently confused, thereby suggesting that, in fact, they are one and the same. As we have seen, Tess is shown to discover that what is tragedy for one is comedy for another. Implicitly conveyed, however, is the decisive factor of the power structure in defining which is which. In accordance with the Law of the Father, that is, the process of abjection, which is that of the phallic function, transforms a truly tragic story into a satirical farce, as a safeguard against the potentially disruptive Real Other, thus kept in check through the ridiculing catharsis of laughter. Hence, the tragedy of many of the lower classes, especially of women, therefore, being part of the exploited abject of the power structure, is reduced to near nothing as it is transformed into a laughing matter as comedy, in resonance with the phallic function. Accordingly, when the home of Tess's family is taken over by a family of laborers, who are more profitable for the farmer in the new era of largescale agriculture, the narrative voice emphasizes the implications of tragedy for Tess's family, whose home will soon be forgotten, "like a tale told by an idiot" (459). With the narrative voice seeming to be cynically straightforward and harsh, that is, the quote from Macbeth nevertheless hints at its signifiance, conveying

a sense of tragedy which calls for empathy. Likewise, if Angel's words in the above conflict claim one thing, the narrative signs reveal the opposite, namely a strong sympathy for Tess's suffering, revelatory of a signifiance which transforms her fate into be felt by the reader as truly worthy of a Shakespearean tragedy.

The characteristics of comedy and tragedy are played with in a comparable manner in a later passage, this time with Tess and Alec, when Angel has left for Brazil, and Tess is back home because her mother has fallen very ill and is thought to be dying. To distract herself from the somber confinement of the sick chamber, Tess enjoys weeding the garden plot with the other laborers at dusk, when the whole atmosphere of the place is transformed into a dreamlike world of magic through the play of light of the setting sun, mingling with that of the crackling fires, intermittently flaring up to create a veil of smoke, whose effects of distorting shadows, of flashing appearances and disappearances of the dark figures of the laborers, working in silence, with the only sound being that of the clicking of prongs and crackling fire, make the scene appear a world of mystery and enchantment: "Something in the place, the hour, the crackling fires; the fantastic mysteries of shade and light" (430). Once again, a passage of otherworldly ambience, both ominous and ethereal, reminiscent of the enchanted world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600), while also appearing of evil portent appropriate to a Shakespeare tragedy, conveys the signifiance of the close affinity between comedy and tragedy, with their differentiation coming across as dependent on the power relationships of the socio-cultural context.

The figure of Tess in this setting thus highlights the ambivalence of signifiance, revelatory of an eerie intermixture of the somber and the cheerful: "She was oddly dressed to-night, and presented a somewhat staring aspect, her attire being a gown bleached by many washings, with a short black jacket over it, the effect being that of a wedding and a funeral guest in one. The women further back wore white aprons, which, with their pale faces, were all that could be seen of them in the gloom, except when at moments they caught a flash from the flames" (430). With the sudden emergence of Alec, like a Mephistophelian creature, made perceptible to Tess by a flaring up of the fire as if he was born in it, the sense of the ominous, evocative of tragedy is augmented: "The fire flared up, and she beheld the face of d'Urberville" (431). Yet against this dramatic backdrop Alec mocks Tess, as if he were acting in a comedy, belittling her very being with his grotesque enactment of her person, in the manner that comedy belittles its target: "The unexpectedness of his presence, the grotesqueness of his appearance in a gathered smockfrock, such as was now worn only by the most old-fashioned of the labourers, had a ghastly comicality that chilled her as to its bearing.

D'Urberville emitted a low long laugh" (431). With the narrative playing on the relativity of the comic/tragic and thereby revealing its link to the power structure, Alec denigrates Tess's sense of living a personal tragedy, as he tactically manoeuvres her experience of victimization with sarcasm. Ironically, the very means of his sarcasm being a reference to a scene in Milton's *Paradise Lost* is highly suggestive of his own fear of the Real Other as the root of his obsession with subjugating Tess. For, as revealed when Alec re-encounters Tess as a newly converted traveling preacher, he fears her as Woman the Temptress (402), and, as it is written, Alec felt that "women's faces had too much power" (388), wherefore they ought to be hidden from men's view by a veil. At a meta-narrative level, Alec's sarcastic reference to Milton's scene, when he says "A jester might say this is just like Paradise. You are Eve, and I am the old Other One come to tempt you in the disguise of an inferior animal" (431), is thus suggestive of his transforming the situation into its opposite, by mockingly referring to himself as the abject Real Other to exorcize his fear of Tess as the Other; in this manner, the fear of the abject Real Other in Alec is revealed as the hidden motivating force behind his obsession with Tess. Blaming her for haunting him, with, as he says "this paradise that you supply" (409), he is thus determined to gain ascendancy over her as "her Master" (412) to maintain the disruptive potential of the feared Real Other that she represents to him, within the bounds of the paternal.

Feeling partly responsible for Tess's lot, however, Alec claims to be desirous of making amends, insisting that he is acting out of mere concern for her; thus, he says, "Once a victim, always a victim – that's the Law" (411). He goes on to explain his presence in the garden plot by saying that he had "come to protest against [her] working like this" (432). Likewise, he had previously come to the farm to pressure Tess into giving in to him, by explaining that he had come to "help her" (411), for, having watched her working, he had come to the conclusion that "it was not proper work for [women]" (415). Clearly suggestive of a parody of Angel's social conscience and consideration for Tess, Alec's concern for her, like a grotesque mockery of Angel's, calls attention to Alec's fundamental "blind self-interest", which moves him, as Keen describes it in *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014, 27). In this, as we shall see, Alec's offer will lead Tess to an acute state of ex-sistence in the end, highly suggestive of both psychological and physical abuse and even of sexual exploitation. For, like Manston in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), Alec is the 'villain' of melodrama, calculating and devious, whose repressed desire for primary narcissism, as Kristeva describes the condition in *Freud and Love: Treatment and its Discontents* (1987), propels him "in a defence against the emptiness of separation […] towards strengthening the Ego [to exorcise] that emptiness" (42; Elvy 2007, 62). Tess is thus shown to

reflect on Alec's character when encountering him transfigured into a traveling preacher. Struck by the contrast of his transfiguration into devotional passion, witnessing how his "animalism had become fanaticism" (*Tess* 1891, 384), Tess realizes the common source of these passions. Evidently propelled by his prohibited desire for narcissistic love, therefore, Alec's covert reason for pursuing Tess is his desire to exorcize his inner, and most certainly unconscious, fear of the feminine Other. Yet, being a man, Alec is an integral part of the new order of Classical Liberalism, while Tess, who is an ardent believer in and defender of the intellectual freedom it advocates, is nevertheless shown to discover the true implications of the system for women in her situation. Her artistic disposition, as we have seen, her state of singularity, that is, renders the prospect of social adaptation impossible for her. For, drawn towards the sense of freedom of the Real Other, reminisced and idealized, Tess rejects the position offered by the social system, as she refuses to sacrifice her inner life to live in accordance with the Law of the Father, for, as Elvy expresses it in *Sexing Hardy* (2007), "Society suppresses real life" (133). In other words, this is the tragedy of Tess.

Consistent with the message of the narrative voice, Angel's change of heart in Brazil comes as no surprise, therefore, where the tough living conditions and influence of another Symbolic order than the one he was raised in have made him generally less unyielding (*Tess* 1891, 416-18). Angel is thus able to perceive the condemnatory viewpoint in his own attitude and behavior towards Tess, given by a man he has confided in about the whole affair, who openly tells him that he has done her wrong (421). In this manner, on being called into doubt by a stranger, Angel comes to realize the blind spot in his self-image as a liberated man, in total freedom of mind. Now able to question his violent rejection of Tess, he becomes conscious of its being rooted in his refusal to accept the truth of his own self-deceit; Tess's confession had made a mockery of his newly conceived philosophy of life, of learning about life and human nature through the unmediated experience of reality (422-423). Accordingly, Tess shattered his dream of living in harmony with nature, filled with Truth and Beauty, as Tess's whole situation made it clear to him that his ideal of a rural paradise was but the mark in him of his reading of the Romantics. In other words, apprehending the subtle, formative influence on him of his reading, Angel is led to understand the extent to which its impress had veiled his very perception of reality, making him mistake his idealized preconceptions of country folk, acquired through his reading, for reality. Having now come to terms with himself, therefore, Angel regrets his bitter obstinacy against Tess, considering his assumption of her as an integral part of his worldview to be at fault; it had prevented him from seeing her inner truth, as the inconceivable Other,

which a truly liberated mind would have intuited. Angel's love for Tess is accordingly rekindled by the thought of the depth of her love for him, as he realizes that she had feared to reveal her scandalous secret for fear of losing him (424). Seeing this as a sign of the purity of her heart, Angel justifies his decision to return to share his life with her as her husband. Returning to Tess with his new precept thus marks the beginning of Angel's stance as a truly liberated man, with the freedom of mind to judge Tess "by the will" rather than "by the deed" (456), as he had previously done. In this way, Angel is shown to see Tess once again in the idealizing light of her as all purity and innocence. In Kristeva's terms, Angel's desire for Tess is evidently based on the self-love of primary narcissism, as he is only shown as being able to redeem Tess from his judgement of her by realizing the depth of her love for him. Apparently propelled by the desire of primary narcissism, therefore, Angel's idealization of Tess is founded on the image of himself that she conveys to him through her love. Thus, drawn to the image of himself that he sees reflected in the depth of Tess's love for him, Angel now appears able to identify himself with Tess's subject position within the paternal realm of the Symbolic order; in other words, identifying himself with the threshold condition of the creatively inclined Tess within the paternal realm, Angel is now shown to valorize her position as the Real Other within the social order. Henceforth propelled by the force of his self-love, Angel will follow and support Tess in everything she does, having bonded with her to the extent of even accepting her stabbing of Alec as a vindication of her right to a full existence within the social order.

On Angel's return to reunite with Tess, therefore, he comes to understand that she has been driven to accept the arrangement offered by Alec in order to save her mother and siblings from living in deprivation; Tess, that is, has sacrificed her life for that of her family by allowing Alec to provide for them in return for her affection. Thus, realizing that Tess might be in danger, Angel determines to free her from Alec's hold.

Tracing the couple's whereabouts and lodgings proves an unexpectedly hazardous enterprise, however, since they turn out to be both traveling and living in total anonymity (461-65). Angel is only to learn the full implications of Tess's sacrifice, however, when he finally finds her in her temporary living quarters with Alec, at an ancient watering place which has become a fashionable "pleasure city" for the affluent, "like a fairy place", with its eerie appearance of "a new world in an old one" (465). In this manner, the setting of Angel and Tess's re-encounter, after a long period of separation, comes across as an iconic projection of the effect on the couple of the unexpected appearance of the other, like a flash of the past interfering with the present, merging with it, making their distressing present affect them all the

more strongly. Hence, with the two being forced to face each other's transformations, being witness to the life-changing experiences of hardship they have endured since their separation, the scene verges on the tragic with its implications of loss and the irretrievable past. Accordingly, "Both seemed to implore something to shelter them from reality" (467). Clearly, however, the sight of Tess's condition, evocative of emotional and even sexual abuse, comes across as more difficult for Angel. As Tess is at one time shown to reflect, on being subject to the abuse of authority by one of her employers, which was not based on feelings for her, "anything was better than gallantry to her" (367); non-sexual abuse of power, being more tangible, that is, was easier for her to confront. Clearly, the change in Tess noted by Angel reeks of the horrors of sexual exploitation: "Tess had spiritually ceased to recognize the body before him as hers – allowing it to drift, like a compass upon the current, in a direction dissociated from its living will" (467). Thus, Angel, who had scorned Tess for not understanding the Law when she had suggested divorce to remedy the disastrous denouement of their marriage (308), evidently no longer sees things in its light. No longer condemnatory of Tess, Angel is rather prone to empathize with her situation as a victim of the social system. For, judging from his reaction to her stabbing of Alec, Angel is certainly no longer on the side of the Law when, beyond all morality, he notices the relief of catharsis it has brought about in Tess: "She seemed at last content" (475), while he judges it by the very subjective criteria of the depth of her love for him. In other words, as the truly liberated man of a free mind that he has now become, Angel's response to the murder reveals his total detachment from the norms and values of the social order; for he feels but tenderness for her condition, seeing it as proof of her absolute love for him (475). Hence, Tess's deed has in no way altered Angel's view of her inherent innocence and purity, as we have seen in the above, as he has come to identify himself with her state of ex-sistence to such an extent that, like her, he no longer sees life in relation to paternal Law; henceforth seeing Tess as a victim of society, that is, Angel decides to stand by Tess and protect her. The two are thus united as fugitives from criminal justice, living in hiding on their escape from the country, becoming the prohibited abject within the social order, determined to live out their long-repressed desire for prohibited jouissance in defiance of the Law of the Father.

Interpreted at a meta-narrative level, Tess's stabbing of Alec and Angel's acceptance of it as justified can be interpreted as self-reflective instances in the narrative, revelatory of the creative act of Hardy's writing as an act of violence unleashed, to kill the symbolic father in defiance of the paternal process of abjection. Thus, in the manner of the negative aesthetics of Kristeva's detective novels, as discussed by Benigno Trigo in *Kristeva's Fiction*

(2013), Hardy's text can be understood, like Kristeva's, as "both a challenge that compromises the self and […] also a challenge to the establishment, to its culture and social contract" (119).

4. Effects of paternal prohibition

In our preceding study of the spire scene in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), understood in the light of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, the pictorial features reflect socio-cultural notions pertaining to artistic experience, art and the artistic disposition. The ensuing passage. which describes Cytherea after having witnessed her father's fall and her experience of seeing his dead body, is significantly similar, being poetically intense and connotatively charged:

> [Her] eyes caught sight of the south-western sky, and without heeding, saw white sunlight in shaft-like lines from a rift in a slaty cloud […] Ever after that time any mental agony brought less vividly to Cytherea's mind the scene from the Town-Hall windows than sunlight streaming in shaft-like lines. (8)

Here, most evidently conveyed is the fascinating, mysteriously associative tendency of the mind, which often works in strange ways. Interesting in a similar manner is the symbolism, imparting a sense of imprisonment or confinement, in a description of agony and death. Hence, the sunlight, appearing "in shaft-like lines", as if shining through the bars of either a cage or a prison window, gives rise to a sense of entrapment. Cytherea is later to associate the agony experienced at the death of her father with the emergence of "sunlight streaming in shaft-like lines" from the sky, whereby the ideas of death, agony and the sense of confinement are here connected.

Noteworthy is the link between the idea of death and the death of the father in the narrative, when describing Cytherea's experience of death. For, at a deeper level, Cytherea, here becoming the bearer of the death of her father, is suggestive of her artist's insight about what life will henceforth offer. Figuratively conveyed, in other words, is Cytherea's flash of perception of the implications of the paternal realm as associated with agony, a sense of imprisonment and inner death. The iconicity of the text in the terms of Lacan thus conveys its unconscious communication of the sense of the body subdued, the sense of the inner being entrapped in the "straight jacket of language" (Fink 1997, 50). By virtue of the association of ideas the text inspires, therefore, when viewed in the perspective of Kristeva's psychoanalytic semiotic theory, the passage conjures up the sense of the agony[115]

[115] Julia Kristeva, *Soleil Noir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987) 144, 192.

of "the founding break of the Chora into the Symbolic order" (Kristeva *Revolution* 1984, 70) as a form of inner death, with the sense of imprisonment it implies for the artistically disposed (*Pouvoirs* 1980, 23). Notably, Kristeva maintains, "artistic practice considers death the inner boundary of the signifying practice. Crossing the boundary is precisely what constitutes 'art'. In other words, it is as if death becomes interiorized by the subject of such practice; in order to function, s/he must make him/herself the bearer of death. In this sense, the artist is comparable to all figures of the 'scapegoat'" (*Revolution* 1984, 70). Apparently, therefore, Cytherea here also appears as an iconic projection of the artist as a "bearer of death" in artistic practice; as previously pointed out, the description figuratively conveys the implications for the artistic personality of integrating into the paternal realm of the Symbolic order, which, as we have seen, is experienced as a form of death.

Nonetheless, the narrative, with its prevailing sense of imprisonment, agony and death, also communicates a sense of hope, for the white sunlight appearing from "a rift in a slaty cloud" suggests the idea of an opening in the prison-house. Given that the 'bars' of the 'prison-house' only appear as such because of the sunlight, it is in fact the description of the sunlight that metaphorically transmits a sense of imprisonment. Nevertheless, light, with its connotations of resurrection and life here imbuing the scene, where Cytherea is associated with agony and death, can be viewed as an iconic projection of artistic practice as it is regarded by Kristeva; viewed in this manner it conveys the idea of creative activity, whereby the death of the soma is resurrected, when the thetic is re-opened, as the disruptive semiotic jouissance forces its way through its 'bars' (*Revolution* 1982, 81-1). Hence, the passage forms an apology of transgression, representing an artist's yearning for the Other jouissance, attainable through artistic practice. Apparently, however, the scene can also be understood as an illustration of a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) which voices a longing for some inexpressible state of being, beyond the limits of any reigning system:

> [Diderot] wrote there can be no true happiness for the human race except in a social state in which there is neither king nor magistrate, nor priest nor laws, nor meum, nor tuum, nor property in goods or land, nor vices and virtues." This is the anarchism that stands at the end of social progress, but as an attainable social state it is still certainly, as Diderot adds, 'diablement ideal'. (Vol. 2, 14)

As we have seen, therefore, there are many narrative signs in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) indicating an implicit theme accounting for the singularity of Cytherea and Edward's relationship as being something other than an

ordinary romance. For instance, in the previously quoted passage delineating the couple's little boat trip, with the blissful experience of their first kiss, Edward reveals the secret reason which temporarily prevents him from engaging in a relationship with Cytherea, making her "short-lived bliss […] dead and gone" (38). In low spirits, therefore, the couple are described as being immersed in darkness when heading back to shore. Although this evidently reflects their state of dejection following Edward's revelation, when understood at a level that takes the dynamic of Kristeva's view of narrative signifiance into account, the "darkness" exhibits the couple's drawing away from their cocoon of mutual understanding of their essential creative personalities, with each awakening, by recognizing in the other a yearning for the blissful experience of maternal jouissance. The couple "immersed in darkness" thus calls forth an association of ideas with the paternal realm of the Symbolic order as it is experienced by an artist. With his evasive excuse, that is, Edward evokes the sense of a trauma, interpretable as the trauma of having to live in accordance with the identity imposed on them by the social order, which is hence interpretable as reflecting the trauma of the paternal prohibition of maternal jouissance. As the couple approach their destination, therefore, an increasing feeling of imprisonment is conveyed through the imagery of the passage. Observing the red stripes on Cytherea's scarf as they approach land, Edward thus notices how the stripes transform from red to black with the setting sun: "They drew nearer their destination, Edward as he pulled tracing listlessly with his eyes the red stripes upon [Cytherea's] scarf, which grew to appear as black ones in the increasing dusk of evening" (38). With the bars turning black making them appear like the bars of a prison-house or a cage, the scarf becomes suggestive of the sense of imprisonment. The sense of imprisonment is further strengthened by the subsequent comparison of Cytherea to a "captured sparrow" (39) when she looks at Edward with eyes full of blame, while the ensuing description of Cytherea's determination to resist Edward evokes the idea of incarceration still further, when she is described as deciding to "struggle against his fetters" (39). Evidently, at a plot level the narrative thus features the couple's feeling of imprisonment, of being trapped in the deadlock of their relationship. Furthermore, however, since the stripes on Cytherea's scarf are described as observed by Edward, the sense of imprisonment or entrapment also reflects Edward's perspective; thus, they appear an iconic projection of his intuition of Cytherea's fear of being trapped in the net of a calculating seducer. Imaged in this manner, as a potential victim, a helpless captive of Edward, the depiction of Cytherea conveys the idea of the vulnerability of woman in a society obeying the Law of the Name of the Father. The narrative can thus be understood to impart a sympathy for the condition

of woman in what shines through as an implicit social criticism of a patriarchal social system. Considering the reading where Cytherea more generally epitomizes the space of maternal jouissance, forming an iconic projection of the idealized memory of the pre-Oedipal, maternal relationship, however, the transformation of the stripes on her scarf, understood as a synecdoche of the feeling of imprisonment, suggests the sense of the paternal process of abjection of the maternal feminine, thus represented as being kept at bay within the bounds of the Symbolic order.

The paternal process of abjection of the space of the maternal is thus further imaged in this passage with the depiction of Cytherea's experience of the scenery as the couple approach land, conveying her insight into the paternal perspective on the maternal as a territory of darkness, enlightened by the controlling restraint of the paternal realm: "She surveyed the long line of lamps on the sea-wall of the town, now looking small and yellow, and seeming to send long tap-roots of fire quivering down into the sea" (38). For, as we have seen, the sea is an image of the maternal space of jouissance, while the city, which is generally regarded as a site of the paternal[116], characterizes the Symbolic order obeying the Law of the Father. Hence, the town-wall lights brighten the sea with their reflection, sending "long tap-roots of fire […] down into the sea". Once again, the idea of restraint is communicated through a description, which by an association of ideas generates the notion of bars and thereby of a prison. The "long tap-roots of fire" reflected in the darkness of the sea thus figuratively convey the paternal process of abjection of the pre-Oedipal, maternal space, held within the bars of restraint of the socio-symbolic order as experienced by Cytherea as a trauma. The town-wall lights, described as "tap-roots of fire sent quivering down into the sea", however, also connote the sense of a yearning or a tending towards. Moreover, with the image of roots suggesting their tending towards the source of growth and renewal of the dark waters of the sea, the narrative also displays Cytherea's artistic insight into the illusory nature of the paternal Symbolic order as total enlightenment. For the city lights reflected in the dark waters of the sea only partially illuminate it. In fact, although composed of and feeding on the vast territory of its waters, whose incessant, forceful flow escapes the enlightenment of the city, they are no more than reflections on its surface. Accordingly, the narrative exhibits the consolation, for an artist or a poet, that paternal prohibition can be circumvented; the lost, yearned for state of pre-symbolic maternal jouissance can be re-experienced within the paternal realm through creative activity, which feeds on the free-flow of the semiotic jouissance "into and through" the Symbolic order (Kristeva

[116] Maria Schottenius, *Den kvinnliga hemligheten. En studie i Kerstin Ekmans romankonst* (Albert Bonniers förlag, 1992) 70.

Revolution, 1984 80). In this manner, the text figuratively exposes the reversed reactivation of the thetic break in the narrative itself, revealing Thomas Hardy' to the pre-thetic drives of maternal jouissance on writing.

Being well read in theories of the sociology of language, as previously noted, Hardy appears to have been especially interested in the reductive effect of language on the individual; he appears to have been keen on studying the mechanisms of language in relation to the power structure of the social system. As we have demonstrated, Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985) reveal that he was especially receptive to discourses on the condition of woman, supportive of the view that her potential was curtailed by the patriarchal social system in whose language she was defined. For instance, as a quotation reads: "The drama of woman's soul at odds with destiny, as such a soul must needs be, when endowed with greater powers & possibilities, under the present social conditions" (Vol. 2, 12).

Undeniably, as we have argued above, Hardy's novels can be understood as highlighting the situation of woman within patriarchy. In *Desperate Remedies* (1871), for instance, we have seen the portrayal of Miss Aldclyffe as "an extraordinary picture of womankind" (49), definitely not of the marrying kind, for "in her soul she's as solitary as Robinson Crusoe" (49)[117]. In fact, Miss Aldclyffe is of "such changeable nature – like a fountain, always herself, yet always another" (93). Moreover, there is an air of mystery about her due to a partially disclosed love affair with Ambrose Graye in the past, which is suggestive of patriarchal repression of female sexuality. In Lacanian terms, the partially disclosed love affair is suggestive of woman's state of ex-sistence within the phallic function, as it conveys the sense of what cannot be known, of what is censored, prohibited, within the phallic structure, and which can therefore only be communicated between the lines.

Feminine sexuality, thus problematized as it is mystified, however, also evokes the sense of Kristeva's view of abjection. As it is expressed in the novel: "The mysterious cloud hanging over the past life of [Miss Aldclyffe] of which the uncertain light already thrown upon it seemed to render still darker the remainder, nourished in [Cytherea] a feeling which was too light to be called dread" (93). Everything about Miss Aldclyffe, that is, bespeaks the effects of patriarchal subjugation, with the narrative suggesting the sense of her being "other than herself", or, in a Lacanian understanding, of her being not-whole; moved by a disruptive force propelled from within her, Miss Aldclyffe is characterized as being "like a fountain, always herself, yet always another", an "extraordinary" woman, solitary at heart, nevertheless desiring, it seems, to feel whole, to be One in essence, while simultaneously

[117] See also *Desperate Remedies* (1871) 60, 93, 102.

yearning for the idealized memory of the realm of jouissance beyond the phallic function.

Undefinable in character, therefore, Miss Aldclyffe is intimidating, as she inspires a feeling in Cytherea "which was too light to be called dread" (93), unspeakable, it seems, a nameless feeling, uncommunicable in words. Miss Aldclyffe, literally boiling over with the repressed residual in her, is accordingly presented as an eerie, uncanny figure of a woman; understood at a meta-narrative level she appears an iconic projection of the unspeakable feminine, effecting what Kristeva refers to as the process of abjection. Still, Miss Aldclyffe can also be held to be suggestive of what Lacan refers to as the One-missing (Lacan *Encore* 1999, 128), of the symbolic Other which encloses but a hole; in other words, in Lacan's sense of the word 'woman', Miss Aldclyffe evokes the idea of woman's state of "ex-sistence" (119, 22) within the phallic function. In Lacanian terms, that is, feeling divided, separated from herself, Miss Aldclyffe's desire for Cytherea reads as an unconscious desire to be One, to become "whole"; it evokes the feeling of a hopeless desire, that is, for "woman's jouissance" (35) within the phallic structure; in the terms of Lacan's theory, Miss Aldclyffe appears to be yearning to supplement the phallic fantasy of a sexual relationship with its excluded, feminine surplus of a purely feminine jouissance (72-77).

In further support of the understanding of Miss Aldclyffe's relationship with Cytherea explicated above is the dispute which breaks out between the two women when, feeling humiliated, and regretting having confided her former love affair to Cytherea, who is nothing but a mere maid, Miss Aldclyffe becomes irritable and disagreeable with her. Finally losing patience with her irritable employer, however, Cytherea responds by saying: "I tell you that a person who speaks to a lady as you do to me, is no lady herself" (*Desperate* 1871, 60). Nevertheless, it is only on hearing Cytherea's final accusation that Miss Aldclyffe loses her temper, when she is accused of being "an ill-tempered, unjust woman" (60). No longer able to contain herself, Miss Aldclyffe then lashes out at Cytherea: "'Possest beyond the Muse's painting,' Miss Aldclyffe exclaimed – 'A Woman, am I! I'll teach you if I am a Woman!' and lifted her hand as if she would have liked to strike her companion" (60). Reflecting on Miss Aldclyffe's "hybrid nature", that is, the combination in her of "manly strength and womanly weakness" which generates "a dangerous ambiguity" (30), Nemesvari's study of her character supports the view held by the critic Catherine Neale[118], noting that she reveals an obvious "discomfort with her biological femaleness" (*Sensationalism* 2011, 30). In his study of Hardy in terms of the influence of melodrama

[118] Catherine Neale "*Desperate Remedies.* The Merits and Demerits of Popular Fiction," Critical Survey 5.2 (1993)

and the sensationalist mode, however, Nemesvari highlights the portrayal of Miss Aldclyffe's "problematic unmarried status" and her illegitimate son and, as he writes, "even more shocking examples of improper behaviour […] associated with gender transgression" (29) to strengthen his viewpoint of the novel as an "exploration of class fluidity" (29). Hence, Nemesvari explains, "Miss Aldclyffe is very much *nouveau riche*, and her ostensible nobility problematically passed to her through her mother's line is equally newly minted" (30). Understood in the light of this, therefore, Miss Aldclyffe's violent reaction against Cytherea when she challenges her authority is a sign of her feeling "insecure in her status" (30). Moreover, Nemesvari explains: "She thus further reinforces the novel's examination of how the rising cash culture of Victorian England is disrupting class distinctions, for confronted by the middle-class accomplishments and graces of Cytherea Graye, servant or no, Miss Aldclyffe's status supremacy is revealed as conditioned on economic considerations that can be, and will prove to be, extremely volatile" (30).

In the context of this project, however, the delineation of Miss Aldclyffe, with its reference to "the Muse's painting", suggestive of the sense of creativity, can be understood as a self-reflective instance in the narrative, calling attention to itself as artefact, revelatory of the trace of disruptive maternal jouissance and the process of paternal abjection. In effect, therefore, as it is here understood, the dispute between the two women reads as a confrontation between two conceptions of womanhood. When Miss Aldclyffe defies Cytherea with her view of womanhood, not only is Woman spelled with a capitalized initial letter, but it is in this part of the narrative that the reference to the Muse is made. Thus, it is hinted that Miss Aldclyffe's definition of 'woman' is wider than Cytherea's. Clearly, Cytherea's view of 'woman' implies its definition within the paternal realm, as it is understood within the social system, where a 'woman' is a 'lady'. Miss Aldclyffe's 'Woman', however, capitalized, and described vociferously by her, in a moment of rage and defiance, as if "possest beyond the Muse's painting", as if enacting, while evoking it, her conception of womanhood, seems indefinable and associated with strength withheld, a mysterious force, at once creative and dangerously disruptive within the paternal realm of the social system. Clearly Miss Aldclyffe's view of womanhood differs from Cytherea's, and perhaps even reflects that of Hardy himself.

Moreover, on a par with Kristeva's understanding of the process of abjection of disruptive maternal jouissance within the paternal realm, Miss Aldclyffe's conception of womanhood evidently translates her experience of a supplemental force, which, like a threat, seems always on the verge of erupting from within her, to break through the inhibiting frame of her iden-

tity as a woman within the social order, obeying the Law of the Name of the Father. When Cýtherea lashes out against Miss Aldclyffe, therefore, the vehemence in Cytherea's outburst brings Miss Aldclyffe back to her senses, apparently astounded to see her own conception of 'Woman' reflected in Cytherea's response:

> "[…] I dare you to touch me" […] Strike me if you dare, Madam […] Miss Aldclyffe was disconcerted at this unexpected show of spirit, and ashamed of her unladylike impulse now it was put into words. "I was not going to strike you – go to your room – I beg you to go to your room" she repeated in a husky whisper. (*Desperate* 1871, 80)

Here, the overpowering surge of violence taking over Miss Aldclyffe is exhibited as a disruptive force, constitutive of her conception of Woman; this force, being that of Woman, of the truly feminine repressed within the paternal realm, therefore, is shown to be canalized into language, harnessed by it, as it brings Miss Aldclyffe back to seeing herself as she is defined within the paternal Symbolic order, as a mere 'woman' once again, with her inner sense of self reduced. For, as is clearly manifested within the paternal realm, Woman is the abhorrent, the shameful, the abject. Consistent with this interpretation of the passage, Nemesvari, in his previously mentioned study, perceives that Miss Aldclyffe is portrayed as a forbiddingly scandalous figure, an "improper" woman, as he expresses it, given to "compete with men in their patriarchal power" (*Sensationalism* 2011, 33). In Nemesvari's view, therefore, Miss Aldclyffe poses a threat in the novel in that such behaviour, in a woman of her epoch, "endangers conceptions of masculinity both sexual and social" (33). Accordingly, seeing Cytherea becoming, in her retort, subject to the surge of a violent force from within, like a mirror image of herself, brings about a flash of insight in Miss Aldclyffe, who momentarily sees herself in the image of Cytherea, from the perspective of the social system, as deplorable; in addition, the fact that she identifies with Cytherea's innermost self, as revealed in her outburst, it elicits an insight for Miss Aldclyffe into the condition of Woman in the social system under the paternal Law; it awakens her realization of Woman's inner force, restrained in herself, of her own limited and repressed potential within the social system, which reduces 'Woman' to mere 'woman', to the role of a ladylike, gracious being, held in check by decorum while serving to maintain and justify the system[119].

[119] In his study (2011), Nemesvari explains how the expectations of women in Victorian society are revealed through the portrayal of Miss Aldclyffe: "Cytherea Aldclyffe is indeed unladylike and unwomanly in her aggressive reactions, and in her rejection of the passive, self-repressive role that defined proper Victorian female behavior" (30).

In like manner, the narrative suggests an insight into the reductive workings of language in support of the social system. For there are rumours of Miss Aldclyffe's untold story, with indications of a silencing, suggestive of the sense of the inexpressible nature of the truth. Much like Tess's story, which "cannot be told", which is exhibited by the narrative as "socially inaccessible", as Higonnet expresses it in her analysis of Tess in her "Introduction" to the novel (1998, xxxvii), Miss Aldclyffe's story also inspires an understanding of paternal censorship[120]. Likewise perceiving the signs of empathy for the situation of woman in Hardy's fiction, Margaret Elvy goes so far as to maintain that "one can see how sympathetic Hardy was to feminism" (*Sexing Hardy* 2007, 70). Nevertheless, as Higonnet remarks in her commentary on *Tess*, if Hardy shared such a perception of the condition of woman it may have been unconsciously exposed in his writing ("Introduction" 1998, xxxvii). Considered in this context, in the light of Hardy's reading and of his living in a transitional epoch of rapid social change and conflicting ideologies, therefore, Hardy's empathetic portrayal of woman can be held to result from a bout of the disruptive semiotic in the course of his writing, investing his text with an intertextual node of sense that encourages an opening-up of the narrative to readings of its unconscious.

In a later passage in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), equally as figurative as the ones exemplified above, evoking the sense of death in life within the paternal realm, the description of Miss Aldclyffe's obsession with Cytherea can be viewed in the light of Kristeva and Lacan's theories. Evidently attracted to Cytherea as a reflection of her own inner, repressed self, as previously argued, Miss Aldclyffe's obsession with the girl appears essentially narcissistic, with Cytherea awakening the sense in her of living in lack, in a state of ex-sistence, as a woman within the paternal realm of the social order; in other words, Cytherea appears to awaken Miss Aldclyffe's repressed desire for what cannot be, her desire, that is, to feel whole, as in her idealized memory of the pre-symbolic state of maternal jouissance[121].

In a following passage, describing Miss Aldclyffe's death, which is experienced by Cytherea in a waking dream, like a mystic Vision reminiscent of that of a romantic Poet, revelatory of an insight into the hidden truth of

[120] Margaret Elvy, *Sexing Hardy* (2007) 222, 70, 74. Elvy writes, "In his letters Hardy proposed feminist views; he wrote to feminists such as the suffragette leader Millicent Fawcett that a child was a mother's own business, not the father's (collected Letters 3, 238)". She describes Hardy as "a writer soaked in the mother-world, in the poetic evocation of (lost) maternal spaces". Sue and Jude's quest is hence argued to be "the quest […] for an extra-patriarchal space […] socially and culturally".

[121] Richard Nemesvari, *Thomas Hardy Sensationalism and the Melodramatic Mode* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) 33. Nemesvari interprets Miss Aldclyffe's desire for Cytherea as "an intense erotic response to another woman" signifying her "rejection of all male constraints".

life, therefore, the Vision displays Miss Aldclyffe as mere "form"; thus, like Edward in the river scene passage, as we have previously noticed, the image of Miss Aldclyffe in Cytherea's Vision appears as an image of death, showing her "wan and distinct. No motion was perceptible in her" (*Desperate* 1871, 323). Nevertheless, the "form" of Miss Aldclyffe is revelatory of a trace of inner life, for it communicates a "longing – earnest longing – […] written on every feature" (323). In this, therefore, the Vision unfolds as an iconic projection of Cytherea's flash of insight about Miss Aldclyffe's suffering the condition of self-alienation in life; it is evocative, that is, of Miss Aldclyffe's experience of life as a form of living death. The Vision, in other words, can be seen as figuratively conveying the view of life expressed by Manston near the end of the novel: "When we survey the long race of men, it is strange and still more strange to find that they are mainly dead men, who have scarcely been otherwise" (319).

Moreover, the portrayal of Miss Aldclyffe's appearance before Cytherea as a dead "form" once again inspires an association of ideas, connecting the idea of Miss Aldclyffe with that of a statue, and by extension, therefore, with that of a work of art and creativity. The expression of longing imbuing Miss Aldclyffe's "form", as we have seen, makes it appear an iconic projection, in the narrative, of Cytherea's artistic flash of insight into the nature of Miss Aldclyffe's desire, that it is a yearning Cytherea can identify with; in other words, as it is conveyed through what is reminiscent of a Poet's Vision, it appears to be a yearning for release from the state of inner death which living within the paternal realm means to her.

Like a palimpsest of Hardy's creative process when writing, therefore, Cytherea's experience of Miss Aldclyffe appearing to her in a Vision is transfused with the sense of the process of abjection which nourishes Hardy's creative sublimation of desire in his text; the narrative, that is, figuratively displays the desire of Hardy, the author, to merge with the prohibited maternal realm of jouissance. Thus, Miss Aldclyffe's expression of desire, interpreted as conveying her yearning to merge with the mirror image of her former sense of self, represented to her through Cytherea, can be read as displaying the flash of desire irrupting from within Hardy the author as he was writing, disrupting his text with semiotic motility, making it revelatory of his unconscious. An intertextual link is therefore also discernible in the narrative, suggestive of Hardy's concern with the ideas of life as a form of death and the celebration of death as life. As is expressed in a quotation from Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), "That custom wh. history attributes to some ancient peoples: when anyone was born the parents & friends of the family met to weep, & when there was a death, it was made a day of rejoicings" (Vol. 2, 53).

The passage where Miss Aldclyffe appears before Cytherea, as if in a Vision, hence readily translates into the present-day psychological discourses of Lacan and Kristeva, explicating our coming-to-be in language in terms of life and death. As Lacan conceives it, the phallic structure is a realm of death into which I must enter in order to be; within it, I take on the identity imposed as Other; thus I become other than myself in language; it puts me in a state of lack, in desire for the pre-phallic state of fulfilment, for a life in symbiotic union with the Mother, now idealized because lost, with the living self of the Real beyond the self as Other being prohibited through the phallic function; this is referred to by Lacan as the Imaginary, which is life in never-ending desire for the idealized memory of a lost state of fulfilment, through death; it is the self as Other within the phallic, making life become a form of life in death, from which only our bodily death can release us (Lacan *Ecrits* 1966, 21, 72, 206, 215). The "form" of Miss Aldclyffe appearing before Cytherea when interpreted in Lacan's terms can thus be seen as figuratively conveying Lacan's conception of the inner workings of subjectivity, of that which ex-sists between the Symbolic and the Real[122].

As we have also seen, in the light of Kristeva's discourse, the apparition of Miss Aldclyffe, as "form" and as a figure of death, with an expression of yearning conjuring up the sense of her inner life repressed, of desire, when looking at Cytherea, this depiction of Cytherea's Poet's Vision appears as a figurative display of the disruptive semiotic transfusing the Symbolic order. Thus understood, the portrayal of the Vision connotes Cytherea's insight about Miss Aldclyffe's repressed creative personality; it is revelatory, that is, of the subject position of mother identification, characteristic of an artist, as we have seen it explicated by Kristeva. Accordingly, the narrative imparts the sense of the semiotic in excess of the Symbolic order, here conveyed through an image of death, imparting the idea of the experience of inner death with the imposition of the Symbolic order. Cytherea's Vision thus also exhibits the awakening of desire for the loss of inner life, prohibited within the paternal Symbolic order, and therefore idealized. The depiction of the apparition of Miss Aldclyffe in the narrative, that is, represents the pre-symbolic of primary narcissism in excess, in desire within the Symbolic, and permeating its barrier, as it reveals itself in the image of Miss Aldclyffe, thus made evocative of the sense of life as a form of life in death. Mis Aldclyffe's desire, therefore, translates into a desire to experience what lies beyond the surface mirror-image of Cytherea and what she sees in her. In other words, Miss Aldclyffe's desire for Cytherea translates into a desire of Miss Aldclyffe

[122] Daniela Garofalo, *Lacan and Romanticism.* Eds. Daniela Garofalo and David Sigler (New York: SUNY Press, 2019) 128

to come alive, to re-experience the idealized memory of the prohibited maternal realm, of her lost inner self, which Cytherea awakens in her. As Kristeva expresses it, to be alive is to desire (Kristeva *Histoires* 1983, 25).

In the manner of the passages in *Desperate Remedies* (1871) discussed above, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), the narrative relating Angel's somnambulistic state on the night of his marriage with Tess is highly suggestive of the sense of life as being associated with death; in Lacan's terms, therefore, the passage is connotative of desire for feminine jouissance, evoking the experience of life as ex-sistence, which comes with mother-identification, in rejection of the phallic function. With the episode presented from the perspective of Tess, who is subjected to Angel's impulsive behavior during his hallucinatory, dreamlike condition of restricted consciousness and somnambulism, the idea of the couple's desire as essentially narcissistic is further reinforced. 19th century research on magnetic fields and psychic energy recognizes that there is a "creative dimension" to somnambulism (Huntington *Utopia* 1998, 133). Evidently a psychic threshold experience, then, Angel's condition, when transposed into the present-day discourses of Kristeva and Lacan, translates into a narrative expression of desire for the pre-symbolic maternal space; that is, all in one, it connotes the sense of the couple Angel and Tess's as well as Thomas Hardy's psychic abjection of the phallic function in desire for the space of the abject. Having invested the space of abjection within the Symbolic order of his Text[123], however, Hardy has momentarily overcome his mourning, his desire for the imaginary space of the mother, through the act of his creative sublimation in writing.

Tess's experience of Angel's eerie intrusion, as we shall see therefore, transposes well into Kristeva's terms. From Tess's viewpoint, Angel's dark shape appears like a shadow before her in the moonlit room, like a figure of death in movement, with his body described as moving as if in response to an inner force, "[…] with a curiously careful tread […] his eyes […] fixed in an unnatural stare on vacancy. When he reached the middle of the room he stood still and murmured, in tones of indescribable sadness – 'Dead, dead, dead'" (*Tess* 1891, 17). Transposed into Kristeva's terms, Angel's half-conscious behavior, as witnessed by Tess, is suggestive of the state of j'ouis-sens of the paternal process of abjection, making itself felt in Angel, resonating in Tess, to awaken in its turn the sense of her desire for the inexpressible pre-symbolic maternal realm, for the prohibited realm of the abject, within the paternal. For, in this context, with Tess still appearing so "[t]hrobbimgly alive" (307), notwithstanding the stress of the couple's marital conflict, it connotes the idea of the indomitable excess, or surplus, of the prohibited feminine within her, which as we know, is characteristic

[123] Barthes' conception of the text expressed in the *S/Z* essays (1970).

of the rebellious, creatively inclined. In this manner, charged with the heterogeneity which gives rise to signifiance, indicative of Hardy's creative sublimation of the process of abjection in his writing, the narrative evokes the idea of the couple's love as doomed to fail within the paternal realm of the patriarchal confines of marriage, no matter what the circumstances. Lost in the threshold state of somnambulism, Angel is thus shown to act out his deeper insight, more poignantly felt by him in his unconscious state, about the couple's desire as essentially non-sexual; in other words, their desire is of the kind which propels them towards fulfilment in creative sublimation rather than sexual consummation.

Transposed into the discourses of Kristeva and Lacan, as observed in the above, Angel can be seen to enact his insight of phallic prohibition; for with Tess's inner surplus being suggestive of desire for the pre-symbolic maternal, Angel exhibits the paternal process of abjection when, all the while murmuring "Dead, dead, dead", "My wife – dead, dead, dead" (317-321), he carries Tess away to the Abbey grounds to lay her in the empty stone coffin of an abbot (320). In this manner, the narrative is suggestive of the sense of the workings of the Law of the Father, whereby the pre-symbolic self must die to become integrated into the Symbolic order; in other words, with Angel and Tess's marriage understood as reflecting the phallic function, the sense of its implications of inner death for rebellious, artistically inclined people such as Angel and Tess, as we shall see, is forcefully transfused through the textual signifiance of this passage.

Accordingly, Tess is shown as serene and even intrigued when she is carried away into the dark of night by Angel in his half-conscious state, with Tess all the while hoping that he is somehow going to do away with her. Disappointed that Angel does not realize her death wish by throwing her down the stairs as she anticipates, when Angel heads for the river, Tess's death drive characteristically resumes in her Imaginary, as she wishes forAngel to desire to die by drowning with her clasped in his arms. Contrary to the situation of Eustacia and Wildeve in *The Return of the Native* (1876), however, who, as we have seen, exhibit their desire for the unspeakable space of maternal jouissance, in rebellious defiance of the phallic function through a suicidal drowning, such a death, clasped in Angel's arms, remains a mere fantasy for Tess. However, Tess's longing to die in the arms of her love submersed in water, though not realized, nevertheless conveys the sense of her desire for release from her experience of life as death within the bounds of the Law of the Father; it is suggestive of Tess's yearning, that is, to come alive again, to be submersed in the space of pre-symbolic maternal jouissance.

Angel's enactment of his insight about the implications of marriage as equivalent to death, for such as Tess, thus reinforces the narrative sense of Tess's fantasy of death by drowning, as an expression of longing for freedom and release from the inhibiting bounds of the Law of the Father; more generally suggestive of desire for feminine jouissance, the portrayal of Tess's fantasy in conjunction with that of Angel's enactment of her death, that is, suggests the Lacanian idea of the impossible sexual relationship. For marriage has clearly killed the couple's dream of living in never-ending bliss, which is that of feminine jouissance. In other words, with marriage being constitutive of the Law of the Father, which stands for jouissance reduced to phallic jouissance within the Symbolic order, the paternal prohibition of the pre-symbolic Real of maternal jouissance makes itself felt as a force of death for mother-identifying subjects such as Tess and Angel,

5. Effects of a transitional epoch in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891)

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), the implications of the transitional era in which the characters are living, of declining faith and the increase of the power of money comes across forcefully by means of the symbolic narrative, most notably, perhaps, in one passage; this is the one where Tess and Angel are to transport the milk to the railway station for its further delivery to the consumers. Departing from the dairy farm in an atmosphere of enchantment, in bliss at thus being together entirely on their own, the ambience soon changes, however, as the rain sets in (249). Thus, the dazzling landscape transforms, with its rivers and pools metamorphosed from "mirrors of light" to a "lustreless leaden grey" and Tess's hair is altered, becoming "clammy", like "seaweed", like a "liquid gauze", while the air grows cold (250). The imagery here clearly conveys negative connotations of death and destruction. This may, of course be interpreted as symbolizing the traditional idealizing opposition of the pastoral life of the agricultural era to that of the industrialized city, which the couple's ride from the dairy farm to the railway station can evidently be seen to denote. On their way, however, the couple pass Tess's ancestral home, with all its signs of exploitative power; with her ancestors being known as "fierce [and] domineering" (250); here, the symbolism rather appears to signify that the former agrarian social system based on landownership was no less repressive, exploitative or patriarchal than the emerging industrial economy (251). In this manner, the ruins of the old system, immersed in the setting of the emerging new, creates the effect of an affinity between the two; each in their way, that is, is equally domineering, oppressive and patriarchal. As is stated in the novel, however, to some extent, its general setting evinces "Part IV" (180); it conveys the implications for the individual of the transitional epoch of the

rise of capitalism (184); it was an epoch when the mighty families of the landed gentry were in decline; they were losing their power in a system based on the pursuit of personal profit, enabling the development of large scale production, manufacture and investment, at the expense of ancestry and landownership. Clearly, as Tess is to learn when working on the dairy farm, having in their ancestry a mighty landowning family is very common among the milkmaids. In other words, like many others, her family is shown to suffer from the transition of power of the social system; as is stated in the narrative, Tess's family share the lot of many victims of progress (253).

In fact, the novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) contains more passages revealing the implications of what is referred to as social progress for the laboring classes than Hardy's other novels. What thus also comes across in this novel is the increased vulnerability of women in the new system, which is based on monetary profit. For clearly, the new system's promises of increased social mobility are more advantageous to men, as is exemplified with the newly rich Alec, with his adopted name of a formerly mighty family as his apparel of power, set against the lot of Tess and that of many other of the women described in the novel (159, 289, 360-365, 405-407, 433-437). As Tess observes, when playing the game of "Lords and Ladies", the problem is that there are always more Ladies than Lords (182). Tess's deceptively simple observation on the usual outcome of her game, that is, conveys her deeper insight into the implications for women within the social order. What Tess is thus shown to realize is her limited freedom as a woman to reach her full potential. The doors open for women to achieve social mobility are few, and the surplus of women contributes to their plight. For, clearly, the egalitarian ideas of social progress do not apply equally to all, since there seems to be no real opportunity for women to progress, other than as dependent on a man. In this manner, an implicit critique of the new era with its egalitarian claims is transfused through the narrative, revealing the implications of the system which gives rise to an increased vulnerability for women, who are often presented as being driven, by material needs and harsh working conditions, to marry the first man showing an interest in them, irrespective of his suitability (433).

Thus, it is dark when Tess and Angel reach their delivery destination, which is the railway station, whose lights, as they approach, appear like "terrestrial stars" to Tess (251), of more importance to mankind, as she observes, than the stars in the sky. In our analysis of *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) above, we have noted the signifiance of the stellar universe as metaphoric of the creative, imaginative force through its intertextual link to the texts of Plato and Aristotle. We have also noted how the appearance of sources or flashes of light in any work of art is revelatory of the creative

process, defined by Kristeva as disruptive semiotic jouissance and by Lacan as the jouissing substance of creative sublimation that gives catharsis. Here then, Tess's observation on the lights as "terrestrial stars" is suggestive of a deeper insight, coming across as an iconic projection of a poet's Vision of the realm of Truth. For the narrative, invested with jouissance, this is highly connotative; the trace of jouissance within it opens up the text to a reading of its signifiance, which indicates an insight into the process of transference whereby the potentially disruptive force of desire for the unattainable, become an impetus for activity, is sublimated into the social system to provide for its maintenance. Accordingly, the stars in the sky have been supplanted by the "terrestrial stars" of the lights of the railway, signifying the force behind the "flux and reflux" of the rhythm of change (434), which pushes people continuously to move around, to change employers, in hope of a better life, in desire for the unattainable, ultimate satisfaction, while unknowingly merely serving a system which exploits them (*Tess* 1891, 435). For the emerging system of monetary profit is conveyed in a critical light, highlighting its exploitative and exclusionary abuses of the more defenseless groups of the population. In consequence of Tess's contemplative state, triggered by the lights of the railway, therefore, she is shown to reflect on the effects of industrialization on country folk, revealing an insight into how the system of large- scale farming impacts on the laborers, whose work becomes totally anonymous with the increased distance between production and consumer. Tess is hence given the insight into the "ache of modernism" (180), with the full implications of its reductionism and mechanistic view of life for workers such as her; reduced to total anonymity, their work means nothing to the majority (252). In other words, Tess is shown to discern the worker's psychological state of self-estrangement in large-scale production. That Tess's insight is revelatory of the Truth, that it is like the flash of Truth, made apparent to the Poet through the creative imagination, lifting the veil of appearances, is supported by passages of omniscient, third-person narration conveying the sense of the changed working conditions for the laborers. Hence, the laboring women are reduced to total insignificance by the system of large-scale farming; this comes across effectively through the bird's view of them, where they are likened to flies (360). The signifiance of the reductive simile, however, also imparts the idea of their status as the abject within the social system, and therefore, more generally, of the process of abjection which nurtures it; as we have seen, the traveling laborers are made to relinquish their individuality by the working conditions imposed on them, while being fed with the impossible dream of a better life (434). In this manner, the naked truth of the process of abjection is revealed to nurture the system which claims to encourage individualism. Unlike Tess, however, the labor-

ing women are generally unaware of their sordid conditions as exploitation: "not thinking of the justice or injustice of their lot" (361) they are evidently unconscious of the preventive process of abjection, working against them in their striving to fulfil their dream of an improved life.

Another passage revelatory of the process of abjection is the depiction of the state of self-estrangement which the introduction of agricultural machinery gives rise to in the field laborers; as specified by the narrative voice, the field laborers were mainly women, who represented cheap labor for the employer (137, 405-7). Indeed, a forceful delineation of the impact on the field workers of mechanization for increased efficiency and profit is where the threshing machine is shown to give rise to the increased stress of having to adapt to its pace; it is shown to contribute to the mechanistic dehumanization of the worker, set in the state of self-estrangement. Moreover, for the sake of profit, it is an itinerant threshing machine, whose operator is an anonymous figure from some other part of the country, impersonally referred to as the "mechanic" (405-7). Accordingly, the system of monetary profit is revealed to affect agricultural work by making it increasingly stressful, dehumanizing and monotonous.

Hence, like the symbolism of the stars in the sky supplanted by the "terrestrial stars" of the lights of the railway station, the symbol of the sun, hitherto argued in this project to emblematize the mystical creative feminine force of life and renewal, is now portrayed in negative terms as malevolent, as "sticking into [the working women] like glass splinters" (361-365), its rays feeling "like a pain mark set upon [Tess]" (284) at the dairy farm, and now seeming "ugly to her" (192-192). Apparently, in this novel, as with the stars becoming "terrestrial stars", the sun, as it is described in an introduction to a description of the workings of a reaping machine, "had a curious sentient, personal look, demanding the masculine pronoun for its adequate expression" (136). In other words, the emblem of the sun is thus made phallic: "The luminary was a golden-haired, beaming, mild-eyed, God-like creature, gazing down in the vigour and intentness of youth upon an earth that was brimming with interest for him" (136) suggests the signifiance of paternal prohibition, of the process of abjection which exploits the potentially disruptive creative force of the feminine while containing it within the phallic frame of reference. Hence, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), the "malevolent" force of the sun signifies the effect of the repressive force of paternal prohibition of the truly feminine creative within the emerging social order of a highly patriarchal, industrial economy.

6. Anticlimactic endings

Literary critics[124] generally highlight or at least comment on the ambiguous, anticlimactic endings of Hardy's novels as a distinctive feature of his plots. As Margaret Elvy appropriately observes in *Sexing Hardy* (2007): "In Hardy's fiction tragedies often begin with marriage" (61). In Hardy's novels, that is, marriage endings present "no joyous [finales] of a fairy tale" (87). Indeed, the final marriage scene of *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) ends with a hint of possible betrayal by Fancy which might lead to the breakdown of the marriage, as Fancy is shown to think of a secret "she would never tell" her husband, the very moment after they have promised never to keep secrets from each other. In *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), meanwhile, as a result of her marriage of convenience to the widower Lord Luxellian, Elfride's health withers away before she finally dies from a miscarriage. The anticlimactic ending of *The Return of the Native* (1876), when Thomasin marries Diggory Venn, is hardly consistent with the dramatic implications of its plot. Similarly, *Jude the Obscure* (1896) ends with Sue's marriage of convenience to Phillotson, for whom she feels an aversion, while Jude falls prey to the deceitful narcissist Arabella, who tricks him into marrying her, though she heartlessly leaves him for another when he is ill and dying. Untypically for a Hardy novel, it seems, *Desperate Remedies* (1871) ends on a good note, therefore, with Cytherea and Edward marrying. As we shall see, however, seemingly inconsistent with the general tone of the novel, the scene with the happily married couple in their new home, described like an idyll, nevertheless comes across as befitting the narrative. As Nemesvari also understands it in his previously cited study, "Cytherea's inevitable marriage to Springrove [appears] severely anticlimactic" (*Sensationalism* 2011, 45) when it is set in relation to the dramatic potential of the plot. Indeed, as we shall see, there is an ambiguity in the portrayal of the scene which prompts a nonliteral reading. In other words, there appears to be a sliding of perspectives in the narration of the scene, marking it with irony, almost to the extent of making a mockery of it all.

Accordingly, the scene is introduced with two characters who have come to admire the home of the newlyweds, one of them being the Parish Clerk Crickett, and the other an inquisitive stranger, come as a reporter for *The Casterbridge Chronicle,* to write about the couple in their new home:

> It was a magnificent picture of the English country-house. The whole of the severe regular front, with its columns and cornices,

[124] Some examples of these are: Richard Nemesvari, *Thomaas Hardy Sensationalism* (2011) 44.45; Suzanne Keen, *Thomas Hardy's Brains* (2014) 64-65; Margaret Higonnet, "Introduction", *Tess* (1998) xix – xxxix; a number of essays in Dale Kramer, *The Cambridge Companion to Hardy* (1999).

> was built of a white smoothly-faced freestone, which appeared in the rays of the moon as pure as Pentelic marble. The sole objects in the scene rivalling the fairness of the façade were a dozen swans floating upon the lake. At this moment the central door at the top of the steps was opened, and two figures advanced into the light. Two contrasting figures were they. A young lithe woman in an airy, fairy dress – Cytherea Springrove: a young man in black stereotype raiment – Edward, her husband. They stood at the top of the steps together, looking at the moon, the water, and the general loveliness of the prospect. "That's the married man and wife there, I've illustrated my story by rale liven specimens," the Clerk whispered. (*Desperate* 1871, 329)

Here, the portrayal of the scene, described as if cut out of an ideal home magazine, creates a narrative ambiguity which makes readings from shifting points of view possible. The uncertain narrative voice hence creates the impression of a multi-layered narrative, whose apparent omniscient picture-painting viewpoint at once conveys the subjective, blind admiration of the Clerk, and the depiction of the scene as an idyll in the *Casterbridge Chronicle*, written by the intrusive stranger, who is the reporter come to the scene for this purpose. Interpreted as a representation of the reporter's article, as an illustration, that is, of marriage as the apotheosis of middle-class life, the passage also appears to be a self-conscious display of the 19th century Victorian claims to the novel form, to consolidate middle-class ideals. Apparently presented as seen through the eyes of the two prying characters, the portrayal, however, with its self-conscious effects of artifice, almost like a painting, also calls forth the idea of itself as a narrative construction. For the words; "there, I've illustrated my story by rale liven specimens" resound with j'ouis sens[125], suggestive of the author's experience, leaving a trace of the disruptive semiotic within the narrative, evocative of Hardy's attitude to the publication requirements for novels in his epoch. Hence, the hyperbolic portrayal of domestic felicity rather suggests a mockery of the ideals exhibited, as a display of how middle-class values are consolidated through literature. For, as we have seen, the seductively alluring portrayal, producing the effects of artefact, makes the narrative self-consciously self-reflective, so that an implicit critique of what is represented shines through, as the narrative exposes the workings of ideology within it.

A further trace of the disruptive semiotic within the narrative is the inter-textual link to Dryden's translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*[126], producing a palimpsestic effect which calls for a reading of the signifiance of its multi-

[125] Here alluding to the double sense of the word *jouissance* already pointed out in this study, as *j'ouis sens* meaning 'I hear a meaning', as previously explicated

[126] "a dozen swans" and "two figures in the light [of the moon]", and the idyllic peacefulness of the scene as a whole.

layered text, in line with the previously analysed boat scene, relating the couple's first kiss. Interestingly, the couple are shown to reminisce about that experience in this later passage of a seemingly happy ending. Hence the palimpsestic relation to the first-kiss passage, suggesting an inter-textual link, to Virgil and Romantic Neoplatonism on creativity, is equally significant, for it affects the idealizing evocation of the ending, to conjure up and strengthen the sense of the couple's love as an impossible love. That is to say, the narrative figuratively presents the signifiance of the force of attraction between Edward and Cytherea as that of their reciprocal understanding of a shared desire to live in an eternal, blissful paradisal state; thus transfusing the narrative is the idea that their desire is not an ordinary form of love, but rather the expression of an artist's yearning for the plenitude of prohibited maternal jouissance.

Understood as an apology of the blissful state of the imaginary, in the terms of kristeva's theory the narrative ambiguity in the portrayal of the idyll lays its author bare as a "questionable subject in process" (*Desire* 1982, 136) in his writing, in trans-conscious communication with his readers through a creative sublimation in writing, through the disruptive semiotic maternal jouissance. Considering that hardy was averse to the victorian ideal of feminine respectability, with marriage as the top priority for women in life, the narrative ambiguity in the description reads as a sign of authorial jouissance, which calls for an opening up of the text to take in the sense of its unconscious. As we have previously observed, edward and cytherea are attracted to each other like twin souls in lack, in desire for the inexpressible plenitude of primary narcissism. Again, the self-consciously artificial setting in which the couple appear in this scene, as if figuring in a pastoral painting or poem, is suggestive of the sense that only art can provide the fulfilment the couple are yearning for.

Likewise, from a Lacanian viewpoint, the narrative here exhibits the phallic function as metaphor, thus revealing the phallic claims to truth as veiled discourse (*Encore* 1999, 54), as a half-telling, a "mi-dire" (93), only. That is to say, what the narrative displays is the knowledge of that which "says no to the phallic function" (72), of "that which does not stop being written" (59); it exhibits the trace of the unconscious, revealing itself through a sublimation of supplementary jouissance (76, 77, 181) in writing, which communicates, like mysticism, to convey the truth of the impossible sexual relationship, impossible because it is rooted in a fantasy (63), within phallic "regulated jouissance" (88). Such a reading of the ending as a eulogy of Art, with all the implications of 19th century Romanticism, rather than of the Victorian ideal of marriage, can readily be summed up by a quotation in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), revealing Hardy's interest, at

least, in the Romantic conception of life: "Nothing is permanent but change, nothing constant but death. Every pulsation of the heart inflicts a wound, & life would be an endless bleeding were it not for Poetry" (Vol. 1, 79).

Likewise, in the ending of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), Angel and Tess's fugitive ex-sistence after Tess's murder of Alec comes across as an apology of transgression. Hence, the couple break into a shuttered summer mansion, where they build a cocoon of paradisal bliss to live out their fantasy of unmediated desire in a dreamlike state of repression of what has been (480), living there and then in exclusion from reality for five whole days, in defiance of the Law. As with previous such passages, here, too, the narrative represents the flash of authorial catharsis, giving rise to the effects of catharsis in the reader, as disruptive maternal jouissance reveals its workings within the narrative, in defiance of paternal prohibition.

In this manner, the narrative iconicity also exhibits the idea of the couple's awareness of suffering from an impossible love; for evidently, their idea of love as an inexpressible state of never-ending bliss cannot become a reality. Clearly, therefore, the form of their desire seems rather to be for the inconceivable Other of maternal jouissance; this appears more consistent with the characteristic yearning of the idealist, rebellious, or artistically inclined, referred to by Lacan as feminine jouissance. In other words, Angel and Tess's fantasy of love, as a permanent state of inexpressible ecstasy, in total oblivion of reality, seems more in accordance with the experience of artistic sublimation than of love in its ordinary sense. This passage, with its portrayal of the couple's desire for a permanent state of inexpressible bliss beyond the phallic erotic, is also suggestive of the sense of Lacan's view of the impossible sexual relationship, as we have seen it explicated in his theory of the play of desire for the Imaginary through the signifier.

Similarly, Alec the seducer, understood at a meta-narrative level, suggests Lacan's view of the impossible sexual relationship with the play of desire through the signifier. For Alec, seeking fulfilment in the Chase is evocative of the idea of phallic desire, which it is impossible to consummate within the phallic order; thus understood in the light of Lacan's theory of the subject, Alec appears an iconic projection of the subject living in a state of constant lack, desiring fulfilment which can only be attained through the Imaginary.

In view of an interpretation of Angel and Tess's desire for each other as a desire of the Real Other for Other jouissance, the portrayal of Tess lying in wait, to be taken away for her death sentence, on the sacrificial altar at Stonehenge, "The Temple of the Winds", is laden with the ambiguity of signifiance (*Tess* 1891, 484-487). Merging with the scenery as if she were a natural part of it, Tess, who evidently loves it there (485), appears to have gained the ultimate insight into the nature of her desire for Angel as being that of an impos-

sible love; moreover, the depiction of Tess on the sacrificial altar, calm and serene when anticipating her death sentence, appears an iconic projection of the idea of the foundational matricidal sacrifice of the social Symbolic order. The narrative thus imparts the sense of Tess's flash of an insight into the general order of things within the social order obeying the Law of the Father; it conveys Tess's perception of the process of abjection, which nourishes the paternal social symbolic structure. Hence, viewed in the light of Kristeva's theory of the semiotic, the passage is replete with textual signs evoking the sense of the force of creativity, of the disruptive semiotic maternal within it. There are thus textual signs such as "the Winds", the sun, the silvery light, and Tess herself, lying in wait, anticipating her death sentence, on the sacrificial altar at dawn (485-6), which are energized by the movements of signifiance to conjure up the sense of the process of abjection of the creative feminine maternal on which the paternal Symbolic order feeds.

Interestingly, therefore, with reference to the sense of Tess's innocence, Margaret Higonnet observes that "[r]eaders wanted Hardy to let Tess live" ("Introduction" 1998, xxxvii), perhaps due to their bearing in mind the characters guilty of manslaughter, who are spared from the death penalty by Hardy. As mentioned by Nemesvari, for instance, the evident "villain", Manston, in *Desperate Remedies* (1871), suffers no death penalty for "accidentally [having] killed his first wife " (*Sensationalism* 2011, 43), while in *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), as observed by Keen in her previously cited study, Boldwood's death sentence for homicide is reprieved, though it is explained by the narrative voice in a characteristically ambiguous way to signal a questioning of its premise, that "Boldwood had not been morally responsible" for the deed (*Hardy's Brains* 2014, 77). The contrasting fates of Hardy's characters exemplified above, however, in effect exhibit the harsh reality for women in late 19th century England as victims of its volatile judicial and penal conditions. In Barbara Caine's study *Feminism in England 1780-1980* (2004), an appeal against the death sentence of Isobel Grant, a woman in the late 19th century who had killed her husband during a drunken fight, is taken up to highlight the extent of the contrast between the judicial sentences of men and women in those days. Commenting on how the defender of women's rights, Frances Power Cobbe, argues in her defense of Isobel Grant by setting her death penalty against the penalty of a "habitual wife-abuser" who in "the very same week […] was sentenced to one week in prison", Caine thus writes: "Why, she asked, should a woman be 'hanged' for stabbing her husband in a sudden tipsy quarrel, when homicides of like kind by men are almost uniformly punished as 'manslaughter' only?" (119).

In the light of the above, therefore, the way in which Alec in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) is given to recount the "legend of the D'Urberville

coach" to Tess, invites a reading of its cynical implications. As Higonnet notes in her "Introduction" (1998), in Alec's flippant retelling of the legend, "the ultimate question, who killed whom, has been lost from memory; 'in the struggle he killed her – or she killed him – [he tells her] I forget which'" (xxv). Here, in the distinctive mode of Hardy's narrative argued for in this project, however, the passage can be understood to convey a sense of defending Tess's innocence even after her stabbing of Alec. As Higonnet interprets it, "Such mocking reversibility of responsibility in a murder challenges the assumptions that moral judgement can be fixed absolutely, and for all time" (xxv). When regarded in the context of the plot of the novel, therefore, Alec's disregard for who killed whom in the legend cynically enough conveys a more general view of the relativity of guilt. Indeed, set in relation to Alec's treatment of Tess leading up to her climactic stabbing of him, the question of "who killed whom" can in fact be posed. Thus, the implications of the "narrative silence" which surrounds Tess, "Tess's unrecorded and unread story" (xxxvii), as Higonnet expresses it, are suggestive of a nightmarish experience of horrific deeds committed against her by Alec, with the implication, as we have seen in the end, of a psychological murder.

Nevertheless, in the novel, Tess is calm and serene while waiting for her execution. As she tells Angel: "I am almost glad. It could not last. It was too much […] now I shall not live for you to despise me" (*Tess* 1891, 487). Significantly, however, to secure their love forever, Tess tells Angel to marry her sister so that, in her absence, he will always be reminded of her through her sister, "as if death had not divided us" (485-6). In Linda Shire's opinion in "The radical aesthetic of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" (1891), the ending of the novel is "especially disturbing" because it deprives the reader of "cathartic closure". (Kramer *Cambridge* 1999, 158). In its stead, the reader is offered a highly disappointing, aestheticized rendition of the grand finale expected from such a dramatic story. As experienced by Shires, therefore, the characters "appear as half-frozen, stylized artefacts, rather than living beings. They are unusual in comparison with other survivors of Victorian novels in that they are both more diminished in human terms and more elevated by analogy but elevated into art rather than life" (158). The aestheticized portrayal of the characters highlighted by Shires as puzzling and awkward, however, is at the crux of the matter, as previously argued in this project. Accordingly, when viewed in the light of Kristeva's theory, the iconicity of the narrative, referred to by Shires as "elevat[ing] the characters into art", is revelatory of the disruptive semiotic of maternal jouissance making itself felt in the narrative, exhibiting, through Tess's wish to eternalize Angel's love for her in this way, the process of the thetic. In other words, understood at a meta-narrative level, Tess here exhibits Kristeva's view of the maternal

function characteristic of the rebellious personality of an artist, with her expressed wish to become an absent presence, an ever-lost object of desire, living on only as a memory of frustrated desire, which, as we have seen it explained by Kristeva, enhances desire for what has become only an idealized fantasy (*Histoires* 1983, 443*)*. In this manner, the narrative also exhibits the workings of Lacan's view of the impossible sexual relationship, as previously explicated, as it also signifies a cathartic moment in the narrative, suggestive of a trans-conscious apology of transgression. According to such a reading, therefore, the final passage is in effect cathartic as disruptive maternal jouissance makes itself felt through the bird's eye view depiction of Angel and Tess's sister, come to see the black flag hoisted on the octagonal prison tower, which indicates Tess's execution. Here the jouissing substance revelatory of authorial catharsis, however, is recognized at a meta-narrative level as a surplus connotative sense suggestive of a mise-en-abyme of the narrative's own fictional status. The octagonal prison tower is accordingly evocative of Shakespeare's theatre, the Globe, with the black flag indicating the performance of a tragedy. Thus understood, the narrative exhibits a flash of authorial catharsis, indicating a moment of self-conscious writing, of 'trans-conscious' communication through the narrative, that the novel, here written, is comparable to a Shakespeare tragedy. However, unlike a Shakespeare tragedy, focused on royalty and those in power, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) is a tragedy of the powerless victims of society; it is about the tragic outcome of those whom Kristeva refers to as the singularities in life, of those who do not fit in because their aspirations, needs or qualities exceed what their surroundings or epoch have to offer; it is the tragedy of the common people whose strong conviction of the right to exist on their own terms makes them potentially disruptive forces in life. As in a Shakespeare tragedy, where order is restored in the end with the removal of the corrupt, disruptive agent, therefore, the chaos of the disruptive semiotic of which Tess appears an iconic projection is restored to order with her eventual execution. Moreover, Angel and Tess's sister, living on as a married couple and signifying the impossible sexual relationship, as we have seen, also signify the status quo of the phallic function. In terms of both Kristeva and Lacan's theories, therefore, the novel does indeed end in a grand finale of catharsis.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, Hardy's novels tend to evoke ambiguous feelings in the reader, whom they seem to fascinate as much as they repel. Though Hardy is held by many to be a misogynist, some feminist critics perceive a radicalism in what they nevertheless understand as his ambivalent depictions of women. As we have argued, however, the characteristic ambivalence of Hardy's novels, together with the reader response they awaken, are reminiscent of Kristeva's definition of the abject and its sublimation in art or literature, effecting poetic catharsis. In view of the general tendency of Hardy critics to present emotionally charged standpoints with an ideological bias of humanist realism, as we have argued, the aim of this project is to encourage less censorious readings of Hardy's novels. Inspiring associations with Kristeva's semiotic theory in more ways than one, however, Hardy's fiction can be read in terms of her view of intertextuality as a transposition of texts. Such an intertextual reading of Hardy's novels has thus been presented in this project to highlight their distinctive quality of an ambiguity that is revelatory of an implicit radicalism in a manner reminiscent of contemporary fiction. As we have seen, Hardy defended his narrative style, when criticized for his unconvincing character portrayals, by pointing out that realism was never his intention.

Kristeva's theory of intertextuality has thus been used to interpret Hardy's novels as an intertextual display of the ideas Hardy acquired through his reading, held to have been transposed into his fiction. Concentrating on what is elicited through the interstices of the text rather than on making a more self-evident plot-oriented interpretation, therefore, this study identifies a theoretical framework in Hardy's novels analogous with the basic tenets of Kristeva's semiotic and psychanalytic theory. Since Kristeva's conception of intertextuality is supported by her view of the split subject in language, referred to as "the subject in process", an understanding of Hardy's novels through Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality presupposes that this study endorses her theory of the subject. Moreover, premised on Kristeva's view of intertextuality as a transposition of texts, this study additionally demonstrates the applicability, to Hardy's fiction, of the parts of Lacan's psychoanalytic theory relating to the position of woman and the desiring subject in language. Perceiving the creative transposition of ideas from Hardy's reading into his novels, as here argued, this project thus also supports the view of a certain correspondence between these ideas, detectable through the interstices of Hardy's fiction, and those of Lacan's theory.

When regarded in the light of his era and in a broader historical context, Thomas Hardy appears to be a perfect example supporting Kristeva's idea of the "subject in process". Coming from a rural background, and trying to

achieve in a domain presided over by urban, upper middle-class values, as Penelope Vigar expresses it, Hardy appears to be "the victim of an acute 'historical schizophrenia', standing on the 'frontier of two cultures'" (1974, 19-20)[127]. Admittedly, Hardy's novels fit in well as demonstrations of what Kristeva refers to as "the repressed truth of a shattered subject" (*Revolution* 1984, 211). The poetic intensity of Hardy's novels, that is, attests to the irruption within them of the motility of the semiotic Chora, which is held to open their scope to multiple possibilities of interpretation.[128] Clearly, as argued in this project, a Hardy novel is best appreciated when regarded holistically, for, as we have seen, it is so much more than the sum of its parts. In other words, as it is expressed in Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), "No one but a blind man or a stonecutter considers the surface of the gem; its very essence is the ray from its depths" (Vol. 2, 290).

As we have demonstrated in this project, Hardy's *Literary Notebooks* (Björk 1985), together with other sources, reveal that the scope of Hardy's reading was ample. Lacking a university education, it is well known that Hardy was a self-educated man with a highly personal culture. Without the delimitations of a university education, therefore, Hardy's reading is revelatory of an apparently unsystematic approach to his highly eclectic studies. It is therefore difficult to determine exactly which texts of Hardy's reading can be said to have had a formative influence on his writing. As outlined, however, the aim of this project is not oriented towards detecting the exact sources of the intertext in Hardy's fiction. In other words, the intertextuality of Hardy's fiction is not studied with the aim of demonstrating the prevalent influence of a certain philosophy or school of thought revealing itself in Hardy's novels. The texts of Hardy's reading are used in a more fluid manner, with the purpose of this study being to detect the presence of their medley of ideas in the subtext of Hardy's narrative, transfusing it with a deeper surplus sense which adds another dimension to the meaning. Moreover, of interest in this study are the ideas from Hardy's reading which reveal certain correspondences with those of Kristeva and Lacan's psychoanalytic semiotic theories. Nevertheless, the ideas from Hardy's reading highlighted in this project have a great variety of texts as their sources, such as philosophical texts ranging from the ancient Greeks to those of the Transcendentalists and other philosophers of Hardy's epoch, Classical literature, the Bible, Medieval

[127] Penelope Vigar, *The Novels of Thomas Hardy: Illusion and Reality* (London: Athlone Press, 1974) 19-20.
Vigar quotes from O'Connor, *The Mirror in the Roadway. A Study of the Modern Novel* (London, 1957, 241).
[128] Julia Kristeva, La révolution du langage poétique (Paris du Seuil, ٧-٥٥ (١٩٧٤. Julia Kristeva, *Histoires d'amour* (Paris: Folio essais, 1983) 115-7, 361-2. Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language.* Trans. Margaret Waller. Ed. Roudiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1984) 80-1.

English poetry, the Romantic poetry and literature and literary movement, the Victorian literary movement, including the New Woman movement, and theoretical texts of the social sciences and of socio-psychological theories of Hardy's time, to cite but a few. Interestingly, the prevalence of quotations from texts with anti-rationalist ideas and theories about creativity, Art and the artist, attests to Hardy's special interest in these subjects. Moreover, corresponding strikingly to the basic tenets of Kristeva and Lacan's psychoanalytic semiotic theories, Hardy's vaguely formulated aesthetics seems to be based on the prevalent ideas quoted in his notebooks. In addition to the above-mentioned ideas about art and creativity, a marked correspondence with the tenets of Kristeva and Lacan's theories is found in Hardy's reading about the power of language within the social order under paternal law and about the inexpressible feminine as a creative, disruptive force within the paternal social order, which includes language under its law.

Moreover, as previously highlighted, adhering to the principle of 'inspired Art', Hardy considered himself first and foremost a poet, revealing an attitude to writing which also affected the style of his fiction, as evidenced by passages manifestly written in a state of creative inspiration. Considered in the light of Kristeva's theory, such passages are energized by the process of abjection, revealing the trace of the semiotic which disrupts the uniform meaning of the text by making it ambiguous. In other words, Hardy himself is considered as an artistic personality in this project, which analyzes his fiction in terms of his creative sublimation

Embracing Hardy's own literary precepts of inspired writing, which accords well with Kristeva's conception of literary or poetic language, therefore, Hardy's narrative style is analyzed in terms of its connotative force. Accordingly, highlighting the signs of authorial sublimation that inspire readings of the subtext, the effects of creative sublimation in the narrative, such as intertextuality, self-reflectivity, palimpsests, iconicity and ekphrasis, are demonstrated in this project to affect the more obvious surface meaning of the text in various ways. As argued, the effects of authorial creative sublimation are interpretable in terms of Kristeva and Lacan's theories as the trace of the discharge of the drives, as a form of transference of the unconscious into the Symbolic.

The method of reading Hardy's fiction in this project is analogous with the approach of Roland Barthes, that is, of a 'collaborative reading', viewing Hardy's writing as 'a layered tapestry' of plural meaning and using the technique of free association to understand the text without regard to authorial intent. The method of 'free association', however, has the restriction of viewing the subtext through the lens of the ideas of Hardy's reading, which correspond to the ideas of the basic tenets of Kristeva and Lacan's theories.

As opposed to a purely 'Barthian' reading of 'free associations', the method of this reading, as we have seen, in a sense restores the author to his text, within which he is taken to be inscribed. Accordingly, this is an essentially text-oriented analysis, which nevertheless takes the author as a subject in process into account. The social context of the author, which reveals itself in his fiction as an implicit social critique, is therefore also an important aspect of this analysis. Moreover, the biographical facts of Hardy's rural background, his lack of a university education and his negative experiences of the demands of censorship are taken into consideration as having contributed to the singularity of his narrative style. Suffering from a feeling of not belonging within the upper middle-class society he wished to be a part of, when interpreted in psychological terms, is evidenced by contradictory forces within Hardy which are here held to have left their trace in his writing in the form of an ambiguity. The biographical facts are thus of interest to consider in this project in so far as they can be held to have contributed to the discharge of the drives in Hardy's writing, nourishing his work with the creative force of his creative sublimation.

In this project I hope to have given an idea of how Hardy's fiction intersects with the texts of modern literary theorists. Linking past and present, my stance is neither that of deconstruction nor of phenomenology, but rather one in which it is the tension between these two theoretical drives which makes possible an interpretation of the sense that transfuses the language of the poetically charged passages in Hardy's novels, disrupting and destabilizing their unitary meaning. The locus of such a method of interpretation can be said to be, as we have previously noted Rajan to have expressed it, that "human beings are ineluctably promised to and derivative of something Other than themselves, whether we call that Other 'materiality', 'the trace', 'Being', 'the unconscious' or 'the will to power'"(Rajan 1995, 20). Thus, by demonstrating a reading focused on studying the workings of the narrative productions of meaning as a signifying process in Hardy's fiction, I hope to contribute to understanding the timeless quality of Hardy's novels, and moreover to inspire an increased interest in this area of Hardy research.

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