Faciality and Sensation in Hardy's *The Return of the Native*

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ALTHOUGH IT CAN NEVER HAVE BEEN VERY TEMPTING TO READ Thomas Hardy as a psychological realist, few critics have gone so far in the other direction as Gilles Deleuze, who states that Hardy's characters "are not people or subjects, they are collections of intensive sensations" (Deleuze and Parnet 39–40). Deleuze identifies in Hardy what he calls "individuation without a subject" (40), which might be thought of as depsychologized character. This is to suggest not that Hardy is uninterested in people but that he is interested in them as material objects, as agents of sensory interaction with the world, rather than as beings that transcend it. To read Hardy's portrayal of sensory experience as part of an antihumanist impulse allows one to attend to his interest in people, in landscapes, and in the relations between them without succumbing to what Peter Widdowson has characterized as the literary-critical institutionalization of him as a humanist and realist. John Paterson and Elaine Scarry, among other critics, have noticed how Hardy's attention to people works against the establishment of deep, round characters with vivid inner lives.[1] But none has been so suggestive as Deleuze about the ways in which Hardy's presentation of the human body as a mobile process can undermine the idea of intangible subjective interiority.

Hardy's materialist account of human subjectivity belongs to a nineteenth-century tradition, at once literary and scientific, of writing about the body as the irreducible source for such ethereal entities as self and mind. This approach was at odds with theological and metaphysical concepts of a spiritual or rational agency that transcends the flesh; it found powerful support in the idea, predominantly associated with Darwin, that human existence originates in bodily adaptation to the environment rather than in divine

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creation. Evolutionary biology and affiliated nineteenth-century sciences promoted the notion that consciousness developed out of the body rather than being implanted in it. The branches of philosophy, medicine, and physiology that contributed to the emergence of psychology as a discipline in the nineteenth century partook of this materialism (Rylance; Wozniak; Young; Taylor and Shuttleworth).[2] Victorian promoters of psychology sought to differentiate it from a disembodied metaphysics and theology; Henry Maudsley, for example, writes in *Body and Mind* (1870):

> The habit of viewing mind as an intangible entity or incorporeal essence, which science inherited from theology, prevented men from subjecting its phenomena to the same method of investigation as other natural phenomena. . . . [W]e shall make no progress toward a mental science if we begin by depreciating the body: not by disdaining it, as metaphysicians, religious ascetics, and maniacs have done, but by laboring in an earnest and inquiring spirit to understand it, shall we make any step forward. (12–13)

Other Victorian scientists, physicians, and proto-psychologists such as Alexander Bain, William B. Carpenter, and George Henry Lewes also sought to correlate intangible human qualities like consciousness and selfhood with somatic conditions.[3] Hardy's conception of the materiality of inner qualities was particularly influenced by the Victorian polymath Herbert Spencer, whose work on physiology gives perception a prominent role as a channel of communication between inner states and external environments.[4]

Hardy focuses his material account of perception and interiority in his portrayal of the human face, a process he undertakes most rigorously in *The Return of the Native* (1878). This novel depicts the multiple functions of the face, as a screen onto which thoughts and feelings are projected and as a physiological receptacle for sensory encounters with the world. In this representation, Hardy, like Spencer and other Victorian physiological psychologists, contests the practices of physiognomy, the most celebrated form of face reading in the nineteenth century. Physiognomy—the system of evaluating individuals' characters on the basis of their facial features—gained popularity after the 1783 publication of the Swiss pastor Johann Caspar Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy*. While physiognomy might appear to be a materialist science of the body, it originated in Lavater's theological argument for facial expression as a manifestation of the soul and an affirmation of divine creation. By contrast, British proto-psychologists of the later nineteenth century argued that facial expression derived from physiological and evolutionary conditions, not from a divine essence.[5] Hardy's treatment of the face affirms this view, for which he found support in a statement of Lewes's that he copied into his notebook while preparing to compose *The Return of the Native*: "Physiology began to disclose that all the mental processes were (mathematically speaking) *functions* of physical processes, i.e.—varying with the variations of bodily states; & this was declared enough to banish for ever the conception of a Soul, except as a term simply expressing certain functions" (Björk 92n899). Both Hardy and the physiological psychologists advocate this material basis for mental and emotional processes, implicitly opposing the spiritual tenets of physiognomy.

Hardy's views, along with those of the Victorian materialists now largely consigned to the history of science, prefigure in striking ways the theories of body, subject, and sensation that Deleuze develops with Félix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Deleuze and Guattari's materialism is in one sense a reaction against a different legacy of Enlightenment, the Cartesian premise of disembodied reason; the body, though never a static entity, is in their account the source and location of consciousness and subjectivity. In their emphasis on the capacity of embodied

experience to challenge any abstract notion of human essence, Deleuze and Guattari implicitly revive elements of the mid-twentieth-century phenomenological philosophy of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (see Grosz), which might also be understood to supply an account of depsychologized character. The phenomenological discussion of perception as embodied experience and of the body as the untranscendible location of subjectivity parallels the concerns of Victorian writers in the materialist tradition and specifically of Hardy. Deleuze and Guattari share with Hardy a foundational situating of the human in the experience of a body made permeable to the world by its senses.

Deleuze and Guattari's notion of faciality is illuminating for reading Hardy, whose writing can in turn clarify faciality, a difficult concept in a book of notoriously difficult concepts. As so often in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari work against common sense, in this case the idea that the human face is an index of an expressive, interior essence—that it is a sign of subjective agency and the capacity for communicative interaction. Instead, they present faciality as a system, or an "assemblage," that provides the illusion of individual coherence, psychological interiority, unitary being, and communicability (175). For Deleuze and Guattari, the face is one of the registers through which modern society regulates and routinizes human behavior: masklike, it generates conventional signs, but it does not therefore hide some deep truth. The face for them must be prized away from its normalizing functions and instead understood as an unpredictable process of sensation and becoming. In its ordinary functioning, the face—or, more properly, the system they call faciality—belongs to the orders of "signifiance and subjectification" (167), of meaning making and subject making, which Deleuze and Guattari see as mystifications and to which they are consistently hostile. Their project of so-called schizoanalysis seeks to disrupt these processes, which are at odds with their exuberant values of multiplicity, flow, and becoming.[6]

A principal target of Deleuze and Guattari is the tendency of ordinary thinking about the face to subsume other parts of the body, indeed to obscure embodiment itself. Although they never mention physiognomy by name, it would be an apt object for their criticism. Nineteenth-century physiological psychologists would have found this bodily materialism congenial, however different their motives for advocating it. Just as Victorian writers like Maudsley and Lewes pay little heed to religious and philosophical notions of soul or mind, so Deleuze and Guattari suggest that faciality belongs to a dualist opposition between body and mind, which reduces the body to a mere container of an interior self:

> The face is produced only when the head ceases to be a part of the body, when it ceases to be coded by the body, when it ceases to have a multidimensional, polyvocal corporeal code—when the body, head included, has been decoded and has to be *overcoded* by something we shall call the Face. This amounts to saying that the head, all the volume-cavity elements of the head, have to be facialized. What accomplishes this is . . . the abstract machine producing faciality. (170)

Deleuze and Guattari show how the body is, to use their term, "territorialized" by the dominant order of faciality. I argue that the face can be reclaimed from what they call the "abstract machine" of faciality by being put back in the body, specifically by means of the senses; the face would then be fully corporeal, not simply expressive of a conventional vocabulary of preconceived emotions or characteristics. Hardy demonstrates how the body can reterritorialize the face, for by emphasizing the function of the face both as an inlet for bodily sensation and as a material entity inseparable from the world of objects, he resists its absorption into the univocality of facialized determinants.

In discussing *The Return of the Native*, I will suggest three main areas in which Hardy gives voice to a materialist insistence on the primacy of the body. He does this, first, in an account of the face as not only the object of perception but also its active subject, which, perhaps paradoxically, demonstrates the resistance of the face to being read as epiphenomenal to psychological depth. In line with contemporary physiological psychologists, Hardy understands perception as equally mental and physical and as located primarily in the sensory apparatus of the face. Second, by invoking synesthesia in striking ways, Hardy explores the variety of sensory incorporations, stressing the embodiment of subjectivity. Bringing together conventionally discrete sensory modalities enables him to dramatize the physiology of perceptual processes. Third, Hardy suggests that these perceptually permeable bodies are contiguous with the natural world, that landscape is in turn a percipient body, and that the two bodies are in a mutually constitutive relation. By animating landscape and, at the same time, showing the porousness of human beings to nonhuman entities, Hardy erodes distinctions between subjects and objects. Elaborating on a conception of people as first and foremost in their bodies—and of these bodies as part of and open to the world through their senses—Hardy presents a vision of body, face, and location that belongs to a tradition of understanding human subjectivity as material. As the principal literary exemplar of this tradition, Hardy can clarify the phenomenological theory of embodiment that culminates in Deleuze and Guattari, who reciprocally help to elucidate his ideas.

While much of Hardy's fiction evinces scrupulous interest in the bodies, and especially the faces, of characters, none of his other novels approaches *The Return of the Native* in its sustained attention to human countenance. The apparent intentions behind the work explain this distinction. The novel followed *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876), a satiric, cosmopolitan work that Hardy wrote to counter the public perception of him, based on his early pastoral fiction, as strictly a regional novelist. When *The Hand of Ethelberta* was received poorly, Hardy took a year-long hiatus from writing to pursue an extensive course of study in criticism, natural history, philosophy, and other fields—much of which found its way into *The Return of the Native*—as well as an investigation of portrait and landscape painting (Björk xiv–xxx; Bullen 94, 117). He returned to his native territory for the setting of this novel with a new seriousness of aesthetic purpose and design; in it, he aimed to show himself, as he had put it in an earlier letter to Leslie Stephen, "a great stickler for the proper artistic balance of the completed work" (qtd. in Millgate 198).[7] Hardy's self-conscious attention to aesthetic form, his renewed commitment to the Wessex landscape, and his amplified knowledge of philosophy, physiology, and portraiture combine with unique intensity in this novel.

Although Hardy's attention to the formal features of the face has been widely noted, critics tend to treat the face as the object rather than the subject of visual consumption. In *The Expressive Eye*, a major study of Hardy's work in relation to painting and visual perception, for example, J. M. Bullen observes, "Again and again in [*The Return of the Native*], characters are introduced into the story in terms of the appearance of their faces. Their presence is always anticipated by fragments of physiognomy or glimpses of facial features. . . . All the major characters enter the story in mysterious circumstances, and each of those circumstances heightens the desire to see the face" (98). Clym Yeobright's face, for instance, is first registered as an obscure object in other characters' imaginations, then in a comparison by the narrator to a Rembrandt painting. When Eustacia Vye is introduced, the celebrated description of her face aligns the por-

trait, as David DeLaura suggests, with Walter Pater's evocation of *La Gioconda*.[8] Instead of being the distillation of a pictorial art, however, this initial description of Eustacia resists facial conventions through its collection of idiosyncratic, unclassifiable, and disjunctive features that seem to make her a collection of natural forces. Indeed, the "Queen of Night" anatomizes what Deleuze and Guattari call the "*faciality traits* [that] themselves finally elude the organization of the face—freckles dashing toward the horizon, hair carried off by the wind, eyes you traverse instead of seeing yourself in or gazing into in those glum face-to-face encounters between signifying subjectivities" (171). These fanciful "traits" work against the *system* of faciality; they are just the sort of features Hardy stresses in his depiction of Eustacia, which emphatically fails to undertake a physiognomic analysis:

> To see her hair was to fancy that a whole winter did not contain darkness enough to form its shadow: it closed over her forehead like nightfall extinguishing the western glow.
>
> Her nerves extended into those tresses, and her temper could always be softened by stroking them down. (118)[9]

For all the rhetorical echoes of Pater, Hardy's character is less a person, or a picture of a person, than a dynamic force, at once human and not. The group of facial features can be resolved into a portrait only by domesticating the vast animated landscape that is her face, including the palpable, dark motion of her hair, a "nightfall" and an extension beyond the body's surface of its capacity for touch. "The mouth seemed formed less to speak than to quiver, less to quiver than to kiss. Some might have added, less to kiss than to curl" (119). The intentions and desires conveyed by the movement of "the mouth" (already a depersonalized object)—flirtation, eroticism, contempt—are subordinated to the narrative's sheer wonder at the variability of its fleshy, sensual form.[10]

For Hardy, I suggest, the face is a tissue of interwoven strata through which physical forms encounter and transform mental and spiritual entities. He explicitly invokes the notion of the face as a fungible medium in a passage describing Clym Yeobright's countenance as a marked surface:

> The face was well shaped, even excellently. But the mind within was beginning to use it as a mere waste tablet whereon to trace its idiosyncrasies as they developed themselves. The beauty here visible would in no long time be ruthlessly overrun by its parasite, thought, which might just as well have fed upon a plainer exterior where there was nothing it could harm. Had Heaven preserved Yeobright from a wearing habit of meditation, people would have said, "A handsome man." Had his brain unfolded under sharper contours they would have said, "A thoughtful man." But an inner strenuousness was preying upon an outer symmetry, and they rated his look as singular. (194)

The theory of embodiment subtending this passage presumes that the face is a vessel for mental contents, which drain or wear it; the physical needs of life, however, compete with these less tangible demands on the body. Clym's internal struggles thus come to be recorded or reflected in his face. Here the face is an object for others—those hypothetical observers who would take Clym to be handsome or thoughtful—but it is also a subject of intellect and sensation. The face is not a text that might be read for its singular, extractable meaning but a palpable surface (the "waste tablet"), molded by mental and physical experiences alike.[11] Hardy goes on to elaborate and generalize the notion of thought as a "parasite" that feeds on the outer form:

> Hence people who began by beholding him ended by perusing him. His countenance was overlaid with legible meanings. . . . He already showed that thought is a disease of flesh, and indirectly bore evidence that ideal physical beauty is incompatible with emotional

> development and a full recognition of the coil of things. Mental luminousness must be fed with the oil of life, even though there is already a physical need for it; and the pitiful sight of two demands on one supply was just showing itself here. (194–95)

Weirdly, the flesh that is the body itself contains "the mutually destructive interdependence of spirit and flesh" (195). Because both drink at the same well, modifying the external form has interior effects. Extending this idea of face and mind as mutually inscribing surfaces, Hardy later writes that Clym's "sorrows had made some change in his outward appearance; and yet the alteration was chiefly within. It might have been said that he had a wrinkled mind" (448). Supplying a morphological account of otherwise invisible internal changes, in showing them to be recorded on the facial plane, Hardy presents thought as a physical process, which draws on bodily resources. This notion substantiates Deleuze's claim that Hardy's characters are sensate individuals without quite being subjects: interior being, Hardy suggests, is not transcendental but is another form of physical existence.

Hardy's literary notebooks provide evidence that, while composing *The Return of the Native*, he was reading Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Biology* (1864–67; Björk 336n885). In this evolutionary account, Spencer, like Hardy, locates at the center of his inquiry the relations between fleshy surfaces and inner depths. At a fundamental level, Spencer proposes that "the broadest and most complete definition of Life will be—*The continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations*" (1: 80); with respect specifically to physiology, he establishes that there is a basic evolutionary distinction between the "outer and inner tissues" of both plants and animals, a distinction that serves as an organizing principle of his work.[12] Spencer explains how certain structures—notably the skin, the alimentary canal, and the organs of sensation—are morphologically "transitional" in the sense that they have evolved from exterior surfaces into channels for "alien" matter to enter the organism's interior (2: 307). While the difference between the inside and the exterior of the body is relatively straightforward in lower animals, in human beings it gets rewritten as a distinction between different *kinds* of insides, the material and the mental; or rather, the mental becomes another form of interior entity, different from the viscera but, for Spencer, in his works on psychology, no less substantial.[13]

This context helps to make sense of Hardy's concept of the wrinkled mind or of the face as a waste tablet of the mind. Like Spencer, Hardy emphasizes the material qualities of the interior, stressing in *The Return of the Native* the expressive capacities of the face and its role at the center of human sensory perception. If the face brings emotions to the surface, it also introjects external material by means of perception. The face, then, is both an inlet and an outlet, like the skin or the alimentary canal in Spencer's account. Clym's "countenance," as Hardy says, may be "overlaid with legible meanings," but these meanings are unstable and flickering, not the singular "signifiance" into which the system of faciality would resolve them. The idea that the face can serve as both record and screen on which layers of conflicting meaning might variously arise is developed in a series of meditations on its function in *The Return of the Native*. In an early scene, Diggory Venn, the reddleman, transports Thomasin Yeobright, whose wedding has just been aborted and who is now asleep in the back of his van. Diggory reveals the sleeping figure to her aunt, holding a lantern to illuminate the scene, and the reader follows Mrs. Yeobright's eyes:

> A fair, sweet, and honest country face was revealed, reposing in a nest of wavy chestnut hair. It was between pretty and beautiful. Though her eyes were closed, one could easily imagine the light necessarily shining in them as the culmination of the luminous workman-

> ship around. The groundwork of the face was hopefulness; but over it now lay like a foreign substance a film of anxiety and grief. The grief had been there so shortly as to have abstracted nothing of the bloom, and had as yet but given a dignity to what it might eventually undermine. The scarlet of her lips had not had time to abate, and just now it appeared still more intense by the absence of the neighbouring and more transient colour of her cheek. (89)

Although it provides a verbal portrait of Thomasin's face, this passage works more like cinema or like time-lapse photography, for the face is mobile: as with Clym's face, emotions move across it, like clouds in a landscape, but with the capacity to effect permanent change. Hopefulness is the "groundwork" of this face, while anxiety and grief come from outside to overlay the facial stratum. The movement of unconscious affect across the surface is embodied in the form of fluid, variable shading, suggesting that what begins as coloration might eventually dig ruts and creases into the surface on which it flows.

Yet if Thomasin's mobile face is to be seen as an object—a membrane that registers commerce between the interior and the external—it is crucial that we know we see her through Mrs. Yeobright's eyes and by virtue of Diggory's lantern. Thomasin's face is an object, then, but an object for or to particular subjects. Like Clym's, Thomasin's countenance faces both inside and out, functioning at once as object and subject. It is not only looked on by her aunt, her admirer, and the reader; even when her eyes are closed, an observer can "easily imagine the light necessarily shining in them"—which is to say, one imagines Thomasin looking back. In fact, as the passage continues, the subjectivity of this object mounts increasingly until the eyes being looked on start to see:

> One thing at least was obvious: she was not made to be looked at thus. The reddleman had appeared conscious of as much, and, while Mrs. Yeobright looked in upon her, he cast his eyes aside with a delicacy which well became him. The sleeper apparently thought so too, for the next moment she opened her own. . . . An ingenuous, transparent life was disclosed; as if the flow of her existence could be seen passing within her. She understood the scene in a moment. (89)

Here the idea of "life" shifts from the one looking to the one looked at, as the signal of this life is the capacity for looking. Paintings do not look back, do not see themselves being seen, as the object in this passage does.[14]

The face, I propose, is so frequently an object of narrative attention in this work because it is the primary vehicle of the subjective agency through which attention is paid. The face is the body's principal repository of perception, the influx and outflow of physical sensation, with which affective and intellectual impressions are frequently conflated, as the word *feeling* testifies. Hardy's attention to the palpable qualities of perception often leads him to substitute one sensory modality for another, a shift that generally moves in the direction of greater direct contact between percipient subject and perceived objects. While Clym is principally associated with vision and its failures in the novel, Eustacia is often linked to hearing. The synesthesia that makes possible connections among the senses is both described and enacted in a passage where Hardy writes of Eustacia's eavesdropping:

> She strained her eyes to see them, but was unable. Such was her intentness, however, that it seemed as if her ears were performing the functions of seeing as well as hearing. This extension of power can almost be believed in at such moments. The deaf Dr. Kitto was probably under the influence of a parallel fancy when he described his body as having become, by long endeavour, so sensitive to vibrations that he had gained the power of perceiving by it as by ears. (171–72)

In discussing how Eustacia's ears stand in for her eyes, the narrative, through a train of sensory regression, marshals an example in which the sense of touch assumes the function of hearing. The strangeness of this so-called parallel highlights the ineluctable corporeality of perceptual experience: the nerves (receptacles for vibrations) have become a diffuse ear that sheathes the whole body. Alternatively, the image might suggest an interior cavity (the auricular canal) folded inside out, now become the exterior surface of the skin. This is the opposite of facialization: here the face is affirmatively put back in the body, where, in Deleuze and Guattari's terms, it can display "a multidimensional, polyvocal corporeal code." That Eustacia's name evokes the eustachian tube, a vital organ of the auditory apparatus, makes the allusion to "the deaf Dr. Kitto" seem particularly apt. Clym's name also has relevant connotations, suggesting eyebright, an herb long used in England as a remedy for visual ailments.[15] When Clym loses his sight later in the story, he enacts Dr. Kitto's procedures: "The life of this sweet cousin [Thomasin], her baby, and her servants, came to Clym's senses only in the form of sounds through a wood partition as he sat over books of exceptionally large type; but his ear became at last so accustomed to these slight noises from the other part of the house that he almost could witness the scenes they signified" (449). In the absence of the sense classically ranked highest, sight, these characters cultivate other sensory modalities, senses that, to Hardy's way of thinking, permit of greater direct contact between subjects and objects than vision does. Hardy reconceives sight along the lines of what some critics, adopting Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, have called haptic visuality, whereby looking ceases to be remote and distanced, becoming instead proximate and intersubjective (see Marks). Hardy's reference to Dr. Kitto was gleaned from Spencer's *Principles of Biology* (Björk 336n885), a text in which the eyes are shown to have evolved from the outer layers of skin: "Marvellous as the fact appears," Spencer writes, "the eye considered as an optical apparatus is wholly produced by metamorphoses of the skin" (2: 305). Touch, sight, and sound do not merely substitute for one another but also substantially overlap in the fleshy field of the face.

In Hardy's imagination, deprivation of one sense is thus less a debility than an opportunity for cultivating alternative means of intellection. Invocations of synesthesia are often induced by perceptions of the natural world, for in the process of making connections among different sensory modalities, Hardy erases distinctions between the human body and its exterior surroundings. In writing of the wind, for instance, Hardy shows the organic phenomenon to interpenetrate the human subjects it encounters:

> Its tone was indeed solemn and pervasive. Compound utterances addressed themselves to [the inhabitants'] senses, and it was possible to view by ear the features of the neighbourhood. Acoustic pictures were returned from the darkened scenery; they could hear where the tracts of heather began and ended; where the furze was growing stalky and tall; where it had been recently cut; in what direction the fir-clump lay, and how near was the pit in which the hollies grew; for these differing features had their voices no less than their shapes and colours. (139)

The notion of "acoustic pictures" spatially and temporally reorganizes the relation between perceiving subject and object, turning a distant visual mode of sensation into an incorporative and dynamic auditory one, while making the natural object—the wind passing over the heath—the agent of sensation and the human ear the passive recipient of an aural image.[16] This is one of many passages documenting the auditory qualities of the heath, to which Eustacia is particularly attuned. The fullest of these, lasting several pages (at the beginning of book 1, ch. 6), opens with Eustacia on the

barrow awaiting a sign from her lover, and the description of the sound of the wind on the heath moves in and out of her perception of it. The wind moves across, around, and through her body, entering it in the form of music that arises from desiccated heath bells, which are themselves described as if they were little ears that impress on her ear:

> So low was an individual sound from these that a combination of hundreds only just emerged from silence, and the myriads of the whole declivity reached the woman's ear but as a shrivelled and intermittent recitative. Yet scarcely a single accent among the many afloat tonight could have such power to impress a listener with thoughts of its origin. One inwardly saw the infinity of those combined multitudes; and perceived that each of the tiny trumpets was seized on, entered, scoured and emerged from by the wind as thoroughly as if it were as vast as a crater. (105–06)

The tactile description of the heath music as a process, whereby air rubs against a surface, produces that inward picture. Showing how such sounds "laid hold of [Eustacia's] attention," Hardy continually and recursively makes the percipient body and the natural origin of the sound stand for each other. It is a music perceptible in a body, which is itself an object in nature, and a music recognizable as such because it sounds so much like the voice that comes from a human body: it is a "linguistic peculiarity of the heath" that this sound "bore a great resemblance to the ruins of human song which remain to the throat of fourscore and ten." As so often happens in Hardy, the reciprocal exchange here depicted in specifically aural form finds a model in the sense of touch: "It was a worn whisper, dry and papery, and it brushed so distinctly across the ear that, by the accustomed, the material minutiae in which it originated could be realized as by touch." The sound is a sort of material that lifts from the heath's own ground—"mummied heath-bells . . . dried to dead skins" (105)—and pushes into Eustacia's tubes, themselves seeming more like an impressible surface than a hollow receptacle. In auditory terms, there is no sharp distinction between speaker and listener, human and landscape:

> Suddenly, on the barrow, there mingled with all this wild rhetoric of night a sound which modulated so naturally into the rest that its beginning and ending were hardly to be distinguished. The bluffs, and the bushes, and the heather-bells had broken silence; at last, so did the woman; and her articulation was but as another phrase of the same discourse as theirs. Thrown out on the winds it became twined in with them, and with them it flew away. (106)

When Eustacia sighs, she becomes the agent of wind, not only its recipient; "twined" together, her body and the heath are indistinguishable as sources of that sound: they are "phrase[s] of the same discourse." What Deleuze and Guattari consider the false promise of a facialized subjectivity—the promise of a unique, transcendent humanity—is undone by the sensory production that makes subjects and objects similarly fragmentary and overlapping.

Whatever its sensory modality, landscape description in Hardy relies on a homology with the human body. The features of the landscape that he notes implicitly require a human presence in order to be perceived; processes of human perception and intention, in turn, become organic features of the natural world. Beyond the inroads sensory perception makes on faciality, then, it can also extend across the body to the natural world—so relentlessly dwelled on in *The Return of the Native*—that commingles with human forms. The almost reflexive connection between landscape and body in Hardy illuminates a similarly mutual relation that Deleuze and Guattari posit:

> This machine is called the faciality machine because it is the social production of face, because

> it performs the facialization of the entire body and all its surroundings and objects, and the landscapification of all worlds and milieus. The deterritorialization of the body implies a reterritorialization on the face; the decoding of the body implies an overcoding by the face; the collapse of corporeal coordinates or milieus implies the constitution of a landscape. The semiotic of the signifier and the subjective never operates through bodies. It is absurd to claim to relate the signifier to the body. At any rate it can be related only to a body that has already been entirely facialized. (181)

If the face—or at any rate the facialized, the face constituted as such through semiosis and subjectivity—is ordered, systematized, and regulated by odious social "machine[s]," then the disordered, unpredictable process of becoming is associated with the body (the "Body without Organs" [149]). While this body can be subsumed by facialization, it also, I suggest, has the potential to disrupt, or deterritorialize, the face. That the principal metaphor for this process in Deleuze and Guattari is geography (de- and reterritorialization) suggests to them a series of parallels between face and landscape, both of which are at odds with the fragmented and disruptive body they celebrate—a body, I am proposing, whose fluid process of becoming is most evident in the mechanisms of sensory incorporation. Noting "a number of face-landscape correlations" (172), Deleuze and Guattari show how face and landscape can function in similarly conventional ways. Yet "each of the two terms reterritorializes on the other" (174), so face and landscape can, in their reciprocity, help to undo the facialization machine. Hardy likewise emphasizes the correspondence between human and landscape faces, but by presenting them as interpenetrating through the sensory body, he effects a proto-Deleuzian deterritorialization of both. By means of the senses, in other words, Hardy breaks down distinctions between human subject and objective world.

In *The Return of the Native*, which famously exaggerates even Hardy's usual devotion to landscape description, the natural surroundings of the heath intrude on and become inseparable from the bodies of its inhabitants. In combination with the emphasis Hardy places on the face as repository for sensation, its continuity with the landscape serves further to dismantle any incorporeal idea of human subjectivity. Having seen how Hardy emphasizes the status of the face and its orifices as sensory receptacles and how this procedure serves, in Eustacia's case, to make auditory perception indistinguishable from the wind itself, we can turn to the novel's opening portrait—perhaps the most famous landscape description in British fiction—to consider how it too adduces embodied experience. Indeed, attending to embodiment and sensation in the opening chapter requires revision of two critical commonplaces about the heath: that it is an uninhabited wasteland on which human beings only gradually and obscurely appear and that it functions as a character in the story.[17] The novel encourages the first of these misreadings: its opening bravura description of the barren landscape is called "A Face on Which Time Makes But Little Impression," while the following chapter is titled "Humanity Appears upon the Scene, Hand in Hand with Trouble" (53, 58). But the description provides less an objective representation of natural phenomena than a subjective impression that posits an apperceptive, embodied human presence. The second paragraph states:

> The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. . . . Looking upwards, a furze-cutter would have been inclined to continue work; looking down, he would have decided to finish his faggot and go home. . . . The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely gener-

> ated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking dread. (53)

The personification of landscape is common in Hardy's writing: the heath has a face and a complexion; it retards, saddens, anticipates, and so on. Yet such images personify not only in attributing human features to the natural world but also in evoking the sensory capacities of one who would receive them. In this opening moment, Hardy almost immediately insinuates a human figure (the furze-cutter), ensuring that someone in particular consumes the scene's emotional and visual impressions (such as the heath's appearing to absorb sunlight). That the furze-cutter is not, or not yet, a character (it eventually comes to be Clym) can lead plot-hungry readers to disregard the human presence in a rush to story and incident. But the setting is already predicated on human sensation, even if the inseparability of person and environment tends to obscure the act of perception: the land actively enfolds the human being within it; the observer both emanates from and absorbs into himself the natural topography. While the actions ("anticipate," "intensify") belong grammatically to the heath, experientially they pertain to someone in the scene (thus "shaking dread"). Described as a face, the heath is not simply a personification but—like the other faces portrayed—a dynamic field of human perception. This is not making a "character" of the heath, unless we understand that term in the Deleuzian sense as a collection of "intensive sensations." We might better say that Hardy makes a body of the heath.

The land does more than supply the occasion for the percipience that designates the human, however. Further on in the opening chapter, Hardy writes that the heath is "a place perfectly accordant with man's nature . . . like man, slighted and enduring; and withal singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony. As with some persons who have long lived apart, solitude seemed to look out of its countenance. It had a lonely face, suggesting tragical possibilities" (55). In being "like man," the landscape is in a reciprocal relation to the human: each stands as a figure for the other. Yet they are not only symbols of each other, for they also overlap and interact directly.[18] The relation between the heath and human sentience is at once symbolic, embodied, and continuous—which is to say, the landscape is a metaphor for, is metaphorized by, and is metonymic with the human. This is not only a question of whether the heath darkens if no one sees it; Hardy's concern is not to determine if all knowledge is subjective but to insist that all subjectivity is perceptual.[19] The face is the feature shared by the human being and the heath; it is also the feature that opens them to each other.

Critics such as Bullen, Michael Irwin, and Sheila Berger have emphasized the visual aspects of perception in Hardy, and the intensively visual landscape in this opening chapter certainly reads like portraiture. But there are also sensory aspects of it that elude the eyes: "In fact, precisely at this transitional point of its nightly roll into darkness the great and particular glory of the Egdon waste began, and nobody could be said to understand the heath who had not been there at such a time. It could best be felt when it could not clearly be seen, its complete effect and explanation lying in this and the succeeding hours before the next dawn: then, and only then, did it tell its true tale" (53). By insisting that the landscape is better felt than seen—which is to say, apprehended in the dark—Hardy suggests a synesthetic transfer of sensations contingent on embodiment for the scene's comprehension. This is saying more than that the sense of touch provides a truer impression of the place than sight; Hardy presents an interpenetration of subject and object until the distinction itself is eradicated. Like the reference to the furze-cutter, this allusion to situational blindness presages Clym's embodied experience of the heath; as we learn later, he is literally inseparable from it: "He was permeated

with its scenes, with its substance, and with its odours. He might be said to be its product" (231). Eustacia likewise intermingles with the environment, not only with her windy sighs but through her rainy eyes as well: "Extreme unhappiness weighed visibly upon her. Between the drippings of the rain from her umbrella to her mantle, from her mantle to the heather, from the heather to the earth, very similar sounds could be heard coming from her lips; and the tearfulness of the outer scene was repeated upon her face" (421). This mixture of world and body emblematizes Deleuzian "becoming": the landscape is a body, the body a landscape; each is perceptible to the senses, each capable of sensory experience. For in addition to allegorizing the heath to the person, the "dripping" in this passage argues for the contiguity of the animate and the inanimate.[20] Landscape and subject are requisite to each other's possibility, and the difference between them is eroded when crying and raining are indistinguishable. Perhaps because, more than anything, Eustacia longs to go to Paris, the connection can best be heard in French: *il pleut comme elle pleure*.

Finally, sensory perception, a human commingling with the environment, and the deterritorialized face all converge on one figure. Probably the strangest and most memorable collapse of external world and sensate individual in the novel—if not in all Hardy—occurs in the cumulously rubicund environment of Diggory Venn. Beyond the announced anachronism of Venn's trade—the itinerant sale of red dye to sheep farmers—and its irrelevance to the heath (which supports no agriculture beyond furze cutting) is the fact of his "lurid" redness (58). His vocation may explain his crimson appearance, but it does nothing to diminish its mystical and symbolic overtones: "That blood-coloured figure was a sublimation of all the horrid dreams which had afflicted the juvenile spirit since imagination began" (131; see Hagan).

Like the reddle that "spreads its lively hues over everything it lights on," Diggory, by dint of his peripatetic trade, is dispersed and diffused across the heath (131); he is both identified with and an element of it. Clym "might be said to be [the] product" of the landscape (231), but Diggory is literally saturated with it, for his skin is impregnated with rufous material dug out of the earth. Like that of the other characters, Diggory's face receives its due paragraph of narrative attention, but in addition to the play of thought and emotion across his face—which in this respect resembles Clym's and Thomasin's—it also imbibes elements of nature. It does not, like Eustacia's face, evoke wild tempests or invoke classical allusions; it is simply that the ruddy material has worked its way into his pores. Like Clym's, his face is more attractive than it strictly needs to be; as elsewhere, an imagined observer shepherds the transition from object to subject of visual perception:

> The reddleman who had entered Egdon that afternoon was an instance of the pleasing being wasted to form the ground-work of the singular, when an ugly foundation would have done just as well for that purpose. The one point that was forbidding about this reddleman was his colour. Freed from that he would have been as agreeable a specimen of rustic manhood as one would often see. A keen observer might have been inclined to think . . . that he had relinquished his proper station in life for want of interest in it. . . .
>
> While he darned the stocking his face became rigid with thought. Softer expressions followed this, and then again recurred the tender sadness which had sat upon him during his drive along the highway that afternoon. (132)

Charted like the landscape Diggory traverses, his countenance exhibits all the features of Hardy's facial lexicon: an inseparability of face from environment, a fluid shift between roles as object and subject, and an inscribed record of the encounter between external

phenomena and subjective emotions. While for Thomasin and Clym, mental and emotional processes are etched onto the appealing "groundwork" of the face (89), in Diggory, the substance that mars his countenance is unambiguously material. His eye too becomes an object of visual interest as much as a subject of perception, but the vermilion saturation of his face dramatically highlights the influx and outflow: "he lifted the lantern to his face, and the light shone into the whites of his eyes . . . which, in contrast with the red surrounding, lent him a startling aspect enough to the gaze of a juvenile" (127). Just as we saw the variable shading of Thomasin's sleeping face through Diggory's eyes, so we see his face—a repetition of the lantern that illuminates it—through the "gaze" of the boy. Diggory's visage is a porous screen on which the landscape leaves its traces and across which emotions, like the candlelight, dance and flicker, until they too leave their marks; it condenses the various functions that Hardy assigns to the face in *The Return of the Native*. The face is a shifting series of surfaces, affective and material, which work in parallel and overlapping ways, a structure that embodies Deleuze and Guattari's "strange true becomings" (171). More than a mirror of the soul, this face is a sensate record of flows and intensities.

Hardy's account of face, sensation, and landscape helps to explicate the sometimes baffling logic of Deleuze and Guattari: it suggests how the percipient body supplies some means of resistance to the conventions of faciality, how sensation intermingles the body and the landscape, and how interior entities, such as thought and feeling, might be understood in material terms. No doubt Hardy sometimes writes for the sheer pleasure of evoking specific geographic locations and rendering the sensuous particulars of a given perceptual experience. By amalgamating subject and object, person and landscape, interior and exterior, however, Hardy works toward larger goals as well: of moving agency away from individuals and showing how human beings have a palpable, categorical connection with the natural world. Putting the human in contact with a material location may not require a diminution of psychological motives, but it tends to have that effect. In its insistence that will or motive is always embodied, Hardy's narrative links nineteenth-century physiological theories of soul, mind, and body to twentieth-century philosophical concepts of sensation and becoming. By means of sensory perception, Hardy demonstrates the continuity between an extremely wide spatiotemporal vantage on human action—that of the geological, the epochal, the historical—and the minute one supplied by the individual body.

Notes

1. Paterson writes that "Hardy dehumanizes his characters. . . . [A] feature of head or face, of lip or mouth, surprisingly changed into the nonhuman, into an aspect of Nature eerily and incongruously other than human" (465). Scarry writes evocatively of "the reciprocity of man and the object world" in Hardy, whereby "the earth [is] an extension of the human body" and, at the same time, "the human being [is] the earth's eruption into intelligence onto its own surface" (85n12). Barrell discusses modes of landscape perception among characters, narrators, and imagined readers in Hardy, differentiated by class and location. Johnson supplies an antihumanist approach based in Edmund Husserl's phenomenology. Musselwhite's recent work is the only full-scale attempt to bring Deleuze and Guattari into relation with Hardy. Irwin's *Reading Hardy's Landscapes* emphasizes Hardy's interests as lying away from deep, subjective characterization and forms an extended description of Hardy as a descriptive writer of landscapes. In "Seen in a New Light," Irwin states, "Most novelists are essentially concerned with what their characters do, say and think. Hardy's emphasis tends to be on what they (and with them his readers) see and hear" (7).

2. Rylance argues that the concept of mind evolved in the nineteenth century and cannot be strictly delineated from either a religious idea of soul or medical notions about the body and the brain; these concepts were being worked out not in a single discourse but in simultaneous, overlapping, sometimes competing realms of physiology, religion, phrenology, philosophy, and literature.

3. Like Maudsley, Bain argues for the mind as a material entity, concluding that there is "one substance, with two sets of properties, two sides, the physical and the mental—a *double-faced unity*" (196).

4. Björk states that "Spencer was among [Hardy's] more influential authors," citing "Spencer's undoubtedly strong general impact on Hardy . . . conveying such a mixture of contemporary thought" (335n882). Rutland calls Spencer "the speculative writer whose name is especially associated with the doctrine of the *immanence* [as opposed to transcendence] of the Primal Cause" (56). On the ideology of technologies of visual perception in the period, see Crary; on physiological psychology, perception, and memory, see Dames; on olfactory sensation in literature and psychology, see Carlisle.

5. See Taylor and Shuttleworth (3) and Hartley (6) on the English reception and legacy of physiognomy. On the European tradition generally, see Tytler; on the French, see Rivers; on the German, see Gray. These critics take "physiognomy" in its broadest sense (what Rivers in his title calls "the legible body"). They also discuss the rehabilitation of a form of physiognomy later in the century in Cesare Lombroso's criminal psychology and Francis Galton's eugenics.

6. Rushton helpfully explicates ideas about faciality, writing that Deleuze and Guattari reserve their "harshest criticism of the face for that which reduces the face purely to its nominal register . . . as an objective expression of that which lies beneath" (223).

7. Millgate writes that, in this work, Hardy "sought to enhance the novel's claims to be regarded as a serious work of literature by manipulating his story of a primitive and isolated Wessex community so as to sustain unity of place, approximate unity of time, and parallel the foreground action with classical and biblical allusions and structural echoes of the patterns of Greek and Elizabethan tragedy" (198).

8. Cited in Bullen 103. Bullen explains that, while Hardy's prose is indebted to Pater's, the portrait of Eustacia "bears no physical resemblance to Leonardo's masterpiece"; instead, she visually recalls a pre-Raphaelite female subject. DeLaura calls Pater's description a "notorious excrescence" (382). By contrast, Rutland calls "the portrait of Eustacia, in chapter seven . . . perhaps the best, the subtlest and the most significant that Hardy ever drew" (184).

9. I rely throughout on the final, revised edition of 1912.

10. Paterson writes that in Hardy "[t]he human eye is not just *like* something vast or strange in Nature; it *is* something vast or strange in Nature. . . . The eye that *is* the human expression and *is* the human being is suddenly no longer human" (466).

11. To the extent that the face is often presented as text, I concur with Wike that "[t]he world as text in Hardy is a matter mainly of legible faces" (455), but I emphasize its status as an inscribed surface, not a text whose meaning is transparent.

12. In his notebook, Hardy indites a related passage from the same work: "The highest possible Life is reached when there is some inner relation of actions fitted to meet every outer relation of actions by which the organism can be affected" (Björk 90n883).

13. In chapters on "The Substance of Mind" and "The Composition of Mind," in *Principles of Psychology*, Spencer considers objections to the materialist conception of mind. While he acknowledges the untranslatability of "Spirit" and "Matter" in this work, he finally accepts that material terms are the only ones available for analyzing the mind and defies his readers to do any better.

14. For a discussion of perception in this novel, and in Hardy's work more generally, as illustrative of historically determined ideological arrangements, see Wotton, esp. ch. 8.

15. I am grateful to Abigail Bardi for this information and for noting *eustachian*.

16. Irwin describes Hardy's use of noise as part of his landscape portraiture (*Reading Hardy's Landscapes*, ch. 3), citing many of the same passages I discuss. Beer addresses some of these passages as well, arguing that in Hardy, as in Darwin, plot moves forward in time with impersonal and often cruel inevitability, whereas "writing" evokes the pleasures of immediate sensory apprehension. She observes that "[t]ouch and hearing lie peculiarly close in [Hardy's] economy of the senses" (222). Recent scholarship on hearing is rich: see Connor (*Dumbstruck* and "Modern Auditory I"); Rée; Picker; Schmidt.

17. For a classic example of these two assumptions, see Brooks. On personification of the heath, see also Fleishman. Rutland writes, "Egdon Heath might almost be called the principal character of the book, for we are made to feel its 'vast impassivity' as a living presence" (179). Miller reads this personification as "the covert manifestation of the ubiquitous presence of the narrator's consciousness, even when he seems least there as a person" (27).

18. Miller suggests the system of mutual metaphor between character and landscape is a catachresis—"If there is no presentation of character without terms borrowed from the landscape, so there is no presentation of landscape without personification" (27–28)—but without noting the metonymic overlap (interpenetration) between them as well.

19. On visual perception as the principal epistemological mode in Hardy, see Berger. Approaching a phenomenological description of this perception, although from a psychoanalytic starting point, Meisel writes of the novel's opening, "The separation between the perceiver and scene, of course, still remains; but an affinity between the perceptive sensibility and the nature of the world it beholds is clearly suggested" (53).

20. Björk notes that Hardy expresses interest in Spencer's "statement that 'it cannot be said that inanimate things present no parallels to animate ones'" (335n882).

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