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Gildas Lemardelé

- 1 Hardy's acknowledgement of the Bible's artistic value in several instances of *The Life*¹ partly accounts for his famously numerous references to it and for his drawing stylistic inspiration from it. It is agreed that Hardy's art was mostly influenced by the Old Testament², and that the spirit of some of its books is also an important contribution to his novels, especially Job³ and Ecclesiastes, as is perhaps best exemplified in *Jude the Obscure*. At least, both these books are often mentioned when it comes to establishing sources for Hardy's pessimism. Yet, as Meusel (Meusel Part 2, ch.3) rightly points out, Hardy's references to the Old Testament are also a way of dramatizing his narratives, of giving them a polemical "add-on", or of offering a decorative display of his scholarship, as he was fond of doing. Consequently, his references to the New Testament have caused less interest perhaps, although he appears to give special prominence to Pauline texts — especially 1 Corinthians, which, according to Meusel (Meusel 35), is the only passage from the New Testament to have had a profound influence on Hardy. Besides marginal markings in the writer's Bible (known as the 1861 Bible⁴) which bear witness to his attentive reading of the passage, 1 Corinthians is particularly significant in that it recurs throughout his fiction with the notion of *agapè*, "charity" or love *par excellence*. Though quite rarely quoted explicitly, *agapè* has been recognised by critics as a regular feature of love in the novels from *Far from the Madding Crowd* onwards. That Hardy chose to draw from one of the most "intensely theological" (Hay 38) passages of the Bible should not be overlooked. His marked taste for the phrase "loving-kindness"⁵ (a phrase which is found in the Old Testament, and sometimes associated to Pauline *agapè*) is also reflected in the occurrences of the term in the novels, especially after *Two on a Tower*, and occasionally in the poems.
- 2 Although the Pauline motif punctuates Hardy's fiction, it culminates in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, where its doctrinal contents are embodied by Mr. Clare and his spiritual

children, among them the convert Alec d'Urbervilles. In this novel the name of Paul of Tarsus is even cited as Mr. Clare's preference: "He loved Paul of Tarsus [...]. The New Testament was less a Christiad than a Pauliad to his intelligence" (Hardy 1891, ch.25, 175). One would be led to think that Mr. Clare and Hardy at least shared a predilection for Pauline texts. The presentation of Mr. Clare's religious views in ch.25, however, is not exempt from critical distance, as is implied by words such as "extreme", "intoxication", and "vice" (175). In ch.49 Mr. Clare is also described as "the uncompromising Evangelical" (358). Moreover, given Hardy's ambivalence to the Scriptures and the paradoxes of his religious and theological approaches, the seemingly common patterns between the writer and the apostle should be taken cautiously. The question of intertextuality will thus be probed with special attention to the twists Hardy imposes on the sacred texts.

- 3 The complex and often cryptic polysemy of the words "love", "charity"⁶ and "loving-kindness" in Hardy's work is sometimes manifest, for example in *Two on a Tower*:

And though the Swithin who had returned was not quite the Swithin who had gone away, though he could not now love her with the sort of love he had once bestowed; he believed that all her conduct had been dictated by the purest benevolence to him, by that charity which 'seeketh not her own.' Hence he did not flinch from a wish to deal with loving-kindness towards her — a sentiment perhaps in the long-run more to be prized than lover's love. (Hardy 1882, ch.41, 280)

- 4 Given Swithin's self-orientation (*Swithin*⁷, my italics), his belated feeling of "loving-kindness" is puzzling, but most probably refers to a mixture of guilt and pity; whereas Viviette's enduring love (suggested by her allegorical surname, *Lady Constantine*, my italics) is made to be equated with *agapè*. The confusion around the notion of "love" does not eliminate the significant impact of the biblical contribution, especially as it becomes gradually more explicit. Chronologically, love implicitly inspired by 1 Corinthians first seems to be elevated as a model. Its first representative will be found in Gabriel Oak, whose biblical name instantly confers potential Christian qualities on him. Although not unmistakably equated with Pauline *agapè*, his all-proof devotion and apparently boundless love for Bathsheba has been acknowledged as such. Similarly, Diggory Venn's love for Thomasin in *The Return of the Native*, though again not identified as *agapè*, is also perceived as an admirable adaptation of 1 Corinthians 13: "dismissing his regrets Venn determined to aid her to be happy in her own chosen way. That this way was, of all others, the most distressing to himself, was awkward enough; but the reddleman's love was generous" (Hardy 1878, Book I, IX, 80).
- 5 There is quite a consensus around the following characters as types of *agapè*: Christopher (another name connoted religiously) in *The Hand of Ethelberta*, Tess, Giles and Marty in *The Woodlanders*, Viviette in *Two on a Tower*, and Jude and Phillotson in *Jude the Obscure*. Whether Hardy intended these characters to be embodiments of love/charity as expressed in the Pauline missive still remains to be seen. Of the characters mentioned above, Tess also embodies Paul's two other theological virtues — faith and hope: "the full depth of her devotion, its single-mindedness, its meekness; what long-suffering it guaranteed, what honesty, what endurance, what good faith" (Hardy 1891, ch.33, 232), or "It has been so much my religion ever since we were married to be faithful to you" (ch.48, 356), and "Still Tess hoped" (ch.43, 306). These characters all share a profound humility, but Tess expresses it best ("I only want to love you", ch.27, 189).
- 6 It should be observed straightaway that the term *agapè* is used only once in all of Hardy's fiction (Hardy 1891, ch.35, 250), where, from a literal point of view and as one of the

primary meanings of the Greek word, it refers to the meal left untouched by the newly married pair. In most instances what critics have analysed as love or “charity” supposedly derived from Pauline epistles is in fact a form of selfless love, sometimes even altruism/humanism (Meusel), without its original divine perspective. However, I disagree with Meusel when she affirms that Hardy evokes 1 Corinthians positively; although some evidence will be found in the early novels, the affirmation certainly needs qualification in the later novels. The representatives of *agapè* in Hardy’s fiction are biblically inspired; nevertheless, Hardy shows undeniable detachment from many of the Pauline theological key-concepts. For this reason it would be more accurate to speak of “selfless”, “self-sacrificing”, or perhaps “agape-like” love, than of *agapè* proper.

- 7 The transfer of love from its original goal, namely God, to only the loved one him/herself testifies most obviously to Hardy’s adaptation of the fundamental Pauline notion of love dispensed for the love of God — the prime condition of *agapè*. This partly stems from Hardy’s fickle definition of God — who incidentally is rarely portrayed as a God of love. Tess, for instance, clearly deifies Angel: “godlike in her eyes” (Hardy 1891, ch.29, 199), “worshipful eyes” (ch.31, 211), “divine being like Angel” (ch.32, 220), whereas her religious faith more or less amounts to atheism, as is clearly shown through her deep scepticism about a “Great Power” and her disbelief in “anything supernatural” (ch.46, 340). Tess’s love, though it contains Christian echoes, is thus clearly secularized. The secularity of her love transpires in her rejection of dogma in ch.47: “you can have the religion of loving-kindness and purity at least, if you can’t have — what do you call it — dogma” (Hardy 1891, 350). The biblical terminology here paradoxically emphasizes the value of instinctual love over reason to Tess, and *a fortiori* perhaps to Hardy⁸. “Loving-kindness” may here correspond more to a vague transposition of Auguste Comte’s religion of humanity rather than to Christian philosophy. Interestingly, Hardy allows for clear parallels to be drawn between Tess and St Paul, for example by having her send a “loving epistle” (ch.53, 391) to Angel in his Brazilian exile. However unfailing, Tess’s love is not *agapè* as understood by St Paul. Even so, throughout the novel Hardy illustrates the dangers of such intensely charitable and selfless love.
- 8 Walter Houghton’s contention is enacted through the deification of the loved one. To him, waning Christianity and faith in the Victorian period could be substituted by love (Houghton 341-93). He argues that in this context love was the only thing left to hold onto for people going through a religious crisis, and was possibly used by them as a refuge from cosmic isolation. On one occasion, Angel’s intellectual musings dwell on religious doubt (“the chronic melancholy which is taking hold of the civilized races with the decline of belief in a beneficent Power”, Hardy 1891, ch.18, 134). Though Angel, a professed agnostic, considers himself free from Victorian melancholy, his seeking spiritual compensation in his love for Tess is possibly betrayed by his naming her after Greek goddesses, or thinking her a “daughter of Nature” (ch.18, 136). Because in the Talbothays phase Angels experiences a sort of paganism, this very phrase tends to make Tess a natural goddess.
- 9 Hardy treats Angel’s rejection of Christian “dogmas” with overt irony. To Angel the dogmas and laws of Christianity should be rejected because they are hostile to “Life”: “Latterly he had seen only Life, felt only the great passionate pulse of existence, unwarped, uncontorted, untrammelled by those creeds which futilely attempt to check what wisdom would be content to regulate” (Hardy 1891, ch.25, 176).

- 10 Angel and St Paul would appear to agree, to a certain extent, on antinomianism. Yet the natural law to which Angel sometimes refers misleads him into thinking of Tess as Alec's wife rather than his ("he being your husband in nature", ch.36, 262), and is therefore no more life-saving than the principles and creeds he condemns. As a consequence Tess finds herself crushed between Christian law¹⁰, embodied for example by Mr. Clare and his converts – who are representatives of evangelical Calvinism (Gallet 1993, 35, 37, 39) – and a supposedly natural law. Targeting Evangelicalism¹¹, based partly on Paulinism and conversionism, explains that Hardy should impose profound modifications on his borrowings from the foundations of Paulinism, among them the concept of *agapè*. Ironically again, Angel's "love", contrary to Tess's and despite his claims to creedal freedom, is steeped in theory ("He himself knew that, in reality, the confused beliefs which she held, apparently imbibed in childhood, were, if anything, Tractarian as to phraseology, and Pantheistic as to essence" ch.27, 189-90) and is therefore completely at odds with reality.
- 11 Be it as it may, Angel sometimes quotes Pauline passages, and in ch.31, if he does not use the apostle's thought for his own end, his religious quotation nevertheless becomes intensely torturous to Tess. Hardy's irony again surfaces behind the strong echo of Philippians 4:8: "I won't have you speak like it, dear Tess! Distinction does not consist in the facile use of a contemptible set of conventions, but in being numbered among those who are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report — as you are, my Tess" (Hardy 1891, ch.31, 214).
- 12 Again in ch.34, 243, when Angel advocates a faithful adherence to the words of Paul in 1 Timothy¹² ("be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (4:12)), he illustrates more his demands than his abilities, and at the same time betrays his powerlessness. His wish to distance himself from zealous theological concepts and Evangelicalism does not prevent his narrow-minded behaviour. By complying with the laws of society and its morals he is not the true "antinomian" he thinks he is. Dangerous ill-applied Paulinism is also exposed in Alec's specious conversion, which amounts to mere "theolatriy" in the narrator's eyes (ch.45, 325), and to "religious mania" (ch.48, 355) and "craze" (ch.51, 375) in the convert's own eyes. In ch.46 Alec uses 1 Corinthians 7:14 in his speech (337). The Pauline view of matrimony¹³ here delivered is again fraught with irony since the heroine is defiled, unsanctified at the hands of both men.
- 13 That Hardy attempts to reconcile the notions of *eros* and *agapè* (Hervoche-Bertho 327) is a questionable argument. I would rather argue that these notions are persistently made to conflict, and that the interaction between selfish and selfless love more often than not results in the success of the first. After having been presented as a model in the early novels, it appears that Hardy's secularized version of *agapè* is confronted with cruel limitations. The conscious secularization of an originally biblical concept¹⁴ also seems to tally with the gradually more obvious demonstration of its powerlessness, however noble it may remain until the last of Hardy's novels. In *Far from the Madding Crowd* and in *The Return* agapic love was finally realized and rewarded by a union that possibly allowed some sort of fulfilment – although perhaps Venn's initiating a series of unhappy events in Books III and IV was already an allusion to the limitations of the power of selfless love. In *Two on a Tower*, *The Woodlanders* and *Tess* however, "agape-like" love is thwarted, understood too late and ends in death. In this respect, it might be said that Marty's painful fate, her *martyr*, is suggested through her possibly allegorical name, just as Tess's

saintly name, Theresa, made it predictable for her to suffer accordingly. The heroine, as Hardy's most obvious character of generous love, is even led to murder Alec to go back to Angel, thus paradoxically making agapic love a potentially murderous force. In *Jude*, the degradation of the power of selfless love is taken one step further in that it is almost systematically ridiculed. The promise of salvation through charity (Spicq, vol. II, 275, referring to 1 Cor. 16, 22) thus seems to be partly invalidated by the doom met by Hardy's later representatives of secularized *agapè*.

- 14 As a consequence, there remains little trace, if not none, of self-sacrificial love for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31-33), as part of Christian ethics, in Hardy's treatment of St Paul. Paul also maintains in Romans 13:8-10 that love is in fact the only fulfilment of the Mosaic Law. An underlying implication however seems to be that love as the only fulfilment of the law becomes in turn a law to comply with. And Paul has shown the dangerous impact of the law ("for by the law is the knowledge of sin", Romans 3:20, or the highly polemical "the letter killeth" of 2 Corinthians 3:6). Hardy then seems to prove that even the saving power of love is easily questioned and put under threat, in that it is simply impossible for man to act in total harmony with a divine, flawless principle: Man is not God, and therefore man cannot love man as God loves him. Even the most perfect of human loves will fail and sometimes be fatal when confronted with the imperfect love of others. The suffering intricately linked to selfless love after *The Return of the Native* is also logically left aside, dissociated from the Pauline conception of pain as a glorification of Christ, and of love as intrinsically linked to the Cross (Spicq vol. I, 265). Obviously, Hardy also does away with the justification of persecution and pain expounded in 1 Thessalonians as being part of divine election. In his fiction even the occasional feeble traces of the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, derived from Paul, seem to tend towards damnation rather than to election. This is perhaps confirmed when Jude's status of "predestinate" in Part First, VII (Hardy 1895, 44) is seen in the light of Part V, VI, where Jude quotes 2 Corinthians 7 to question his suffering ("we have wronged no man, corrupted no man, defrauded no man! Though perhaps we have 'done that which was right in our own eyes'", 308). Therefore Hardy takes a double stance: while using the concept of predestination, he later empties it of its meaning (i.e. divine election) through obvious irony in his comparison between Jude and the persecuted apostle Paul (indirect founder of the concept of predestination), and through ironical quotes from Pauline texts.
- 15 Hardy's ironical parallels between Clym and Christ, and later between Jude and Christ, also seem to unveil the vanity of self-sacrificial love. In his rewriting of charity Hardy gradually erases the redemptive value of giving oneself. By doing so, Hardy is laying the basis for a reformulated eschatology that would be contrary to St Paul's¹⁵, questioning the strength of love as an ultimate end.
- 16 Roetzel argues that love in Christianity aims at the "creation of a new order" (Hay 232). The cosmic dimension conferred on the Pauline ethics of love stands in sharp contrast to Hardy's conception. His depiction of the noblest of loves never counterbalances the indifferent, sometimes persecuting, reality of his own cosmic order. The later novels even give the impression that the world goes on undisturbed and unchanged after the disappearance of selfless characters. Focusing on novels with a cosmic plot or subplot soon reveals the insignificance and minuteness of man, especially when he is a protagonist of long-suffering love. In *Two on a Tower*, Viviette's patient love is nothing when set against the monstrous immensity of the universe, and in *Tess*, the "blighted"

star remains so despite the strength and depth of the heroine's love, and despite the naïve impression of a new cosmic order after Angel's first love declaration in ch.24 ("something had occurred which changed the pivot of the universe", Hardy 1891, 167).

- 17 In Hardy's free use and rewriting of Pauline tenets, the only remaining common point between his selfless lovers and Pauline *agapè* as exposed by Fitzmeyer (Fitzmeyer 85) would be the "diminution of the lover's self." The transfer of the divine objective of love to lay fiction leads to a deep transformation of and almost to a deprivation of the original essence of *agapè*. Although Hardy's fictional rewriting of the biblical hypotext often blurs the limits between Christianity and Paganism, erotic and agapic love, or free will and determinism, the point he eventually gets through is univocal: charitable, selfless characters are not rewarded and suffer. Phillotson's name, possibly revealing love (*philia*), may even have been chosen to illustrate the fate of loving people — although admittedly his love for Sue exceeds *philia* in the sense of friendly love. Interestingly, Phillotson's character also happens to have similarities with St Paul. His triad expressed in VI, IV ("justice, charity, and reason", Hardy 1895, 359) could be perceived as echoing the Pauline theological triad and theological virtues ("faith, hope, charity" — 1 Cor. 13). His desire for "loving-kindness" (II, IV, 98), as well as his writing an "epistle" to Sue (VI, IV, 358) also confirm the possible overlaps between the two characters. One sentence about Phillotson may be said to encapsulate the plight of other selfless characters: "No man had ever suffered more inconvenience from his own charity, Christian or heathen, than Phillotson had done in letting Sue go" (Hardy 1895, VI, IV, 357). If Hardy shows the deadly dangers of erotic love, he does not fail to prove that spiritual, perhaps theorised or abstracted love is in no way more reliable. This profound reversal of the Pauline eschatology of love therefore finds some degree of congruence with Schopenhauer's metaphysics of love as an illusion of the Will, which manipulates the lover in order to safeguard the human species¹⁶.
- 18 Hardy's borrowing from Pauline texts for his treatment of love is perfectly consistent with his outlook on the Scriptures and the Christian faith, and is therefore fundamentally complex. Yet it clearly transpires that he was unwilling to transfer biblical theological concepts into his novels as such. Even what Hardy seems to view as the pitiless God of the Old Testament seems to have been rewritten into the unconscious Immanent Will. Needless to say that every form of intertextuality implies relative rewriting, but Hardy undoubtedly goes beyond this, because he often preserves the input of religious literature while modifying, subverting, or even reversing, their theology or philosophy. His apparently monistic perception of the universe, without a transcendent and personal God, therefore applies to his adaptation of Pauline texts and especially of 1 Corinthians 13. Paradoxically then, his drawing inspiration from these texts seems to demonstrate both his deep admiration and no less thorough questioning and adaptation of them. Incidentally, his worsening treatment of selfless love is intricately linked to the aggravation of the tragic import of his novels. I will cautiously conclude that Hardy's rewriting of religious and theological canons allows him to go beyond the aporia that surfaces in Pauline principles (love can be as deadly as the law they reject). Yet it also acknowledges that for those capable of loving, the dangers of selfless love cannot curtail its beauty and truth.

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NOTES

1. For example in 1885: “Easter Sunday. Evidences of art in Bible narratives. They are written with a watchful attention (though disguised) as to their effect on their reader. Their so called simplicity is, in fact, the simplicity of the highest cunning. And one is led to inquire, when even in these latter days artistic development and arrangement are the qualities least appreciated by readers, who was there likely to appreciate the art in these chronicles at that day?”, and a little further: “in these Bible lives and adventures there is the spherical completeness of perfect art”, Hardy 1984, 177.

2. There is no real consensus, however, about Hardy's favourite passages in the Bible. Timothy Hands (25) affirms that 1 Kings XIX was Hardy's favourite Bible reading, while Marlene Springer, insists on Genesis, Job, Psalms and Ecclesiastes (in *Hardy's Use of Allusion*, London: MacMillan, 1983, 3). Hardy's copies of the Bible or his personal writings do not actually give us absolutely trustworthy indications. This lack of consensus indicates that Hardy probably never set his mind on a particular passage, but appreciated several indiscriminately.
3. According to T. Hands (38), Hardy often studied the book of Job in his 1861 Bible, and allusions to it occur in no fewer than eight of Hardy's novels.
4. In Dorchester County Museum. The margin of 1 Corinthians 13, for example, shows the date April 13, 1894. Verses 1, 4 and 13 have underlinings, among them of the word "charity".
5. The term was coined by Coverdale for his 1535 translation of the Bible, and has no appropriate translation in French. In the KJV it is used most extensively in Psalms. In the French TOB it is variously rendered as "fidélité", "amour" or "amitié".
6. The word "charity" is much less frequently quoted than "love" (about twenty times in the novels, most of these in *Tess* and *Jude*).
7. "Le nom même de Swithin pourrait suggérer un recourbement sur soi" (Gallet 1996, 113).
8. Instinctual, undoctinal love also prevails at the moment of Angel's return to his parents, where motherly love surpasses any sort of "theology" (ch.53, 390).
9. See for instance the end of ch.26.
10. Cf. the biblical verses perceived as "Crushing! killing!" by Tess (ch.12, 92), and which also foreshadow the epigraph of *Jude the Obscure*. In the introduction to the Oxford World's Classic edition of *Tess* (2005), Penny Boumelha says that "Tess is victimised by texts", p. xxxvi.
11. Although Hardy went through an evangelical period in his early twenties, when he was familiar with the Moule family, and admired Horace's father Henry, he had clearly broken away from the movement much before the publication of *Tess*, and in fact quite clearly after Horace Moule's suicide in 1873. Hardy acknowledged that Pastor Clare was in part inspired by Henry Moule (see Hands 19).
12. Although to most Bible scholars this pastoral epistle was written much later and is therefore not by Paul himself.
13. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."
14. Cf. the archaeology of the treatment of Phillotson in *Jude*. His generosity in letting Sue go to Jude is described in the manuscript and the serial as "Christian charity", yet in the first volume edition of 1895, Hardy revises the phrase to "*natural* charity" (IV, VI, 247) [my italics].
15. Paul thinks of love as an eschatological reality which, even more than "faith" and "hope", is definitive of life in Christ. Victor Paul Furnish, "Theology in 1 Corinthians" (Hay 83).
16. See also Laurence Estanove, "La poésie de Thomas Hardy : une dynamique de la désillusion", Thèse, Université de Toulouse 2, 2008, 94-105.

ABSTRACTS

In Hardy's fiction love often entails biblical resurgences, notably from the New Testament. Among these, the first epistle to the Corinthians seems to be the most widely used. One thinks for instance of the strong echoes of it in *The Return of the Native*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* or *Jude the*

Obscure.

However, the attention granted to Job and Ecclesiastes has often led the diffuse yet insistent presence of Pauline writings in Hardy's novels to be neglected, or has led to excessively narrow parallels. It will thus be necessary to probe into the patterns shared by the apostle and the writer, and into the modes of this intertextuality, in the light of Hardy's well-known ambivalence towards Holy Scriptures, and of the paradoxes of his religious approach. This paper endeavours to get a better grasp on the torsions and inversions imposed by Hardy on the principle of love *par excellence* (Christian charity or *agapè*) that is expounded in the epistle to the Corinthians. The integration of this biblical hypotext, and its appropriation by Hardy, lead in effect to the transformation of the epistle and of peripheral Pauline writings. This process of rewriting, which obviously implies a secularisation of the sacred and evinces a loss of the original divine perspective, constantly establishes and dissolves links between St Paul's precepts and hardyan thought.

The supposed influence of paulinism therefore seems to contain a strong polemical dimension, which the author weaves and unveils novel after novel. The novels illustrate the cruel or ironic limits of ideal love, which becomes deadly when it is elevated as a law, and remains inaccessible for the human subject without a divine perspective.

Bien souvent chez Hardy l'amour comporte ses résurgences bibliques, notamment néotestamentaires. Parmi celles-ci, la première épître aux Corinthiens semble bien figurer en tête. On pense par exemple aux forts échos trouvés dans *The Return of the Native*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* ou *Jude the Obscure*.

Toutefois, l'attention accordée à Job et à l'Écclésiaste a souvent fait négliger la présence diffuse et insistante des écrits pauliniens dans les romans de Hardy, ou a donné lieu à des rapprochements trop stricts. Il faudra alors se pencher sur les schèmes communs au théologien et à l'écrivain, et sur les modalités de cette intertextualité, à la lumière de l'ambivalence hardyenne face aux Saintes Écritures, et des paradoxes de son approche religieuse. Cette étude tente en particulier de mieux cerner les torsions que l'écrivain fait subir au principe de l'amour par excellence (charité chrétienne, ou *agapè*) qui est exposé dans l'épître aux Corinthiens. L'intégration de cet hypotexte biblique, et son appropriation par Hardy, conduisent de fait à la transformation de cette épître, et des écrits pauliniens périphériques. Ce procédé de réécriture, qui implique une laïcisation certaine du sacré et donne à voir une déperdition de la perspective divine originelle, établit et dissout en permanence des liens entre les préceptes de saint Paul et la pensée hardyenne.

L'influence supposée du paulinisme semble alors contenir une dimension polémique forte, que l'auteur tisse et dévoile au fil des romans. Ceux-ci illustrent les limites cruelles ou ironiques d'un amour idéal, qui devient mortifère s'il est érigé en loi, et demeure inaccessible pour le sujet humain sans perspective divine.

INDEX

Mots-clés: roman, lettre, épître, amour, réécriture, Bible, religion, intertextualité

oeuvre citée *Jude the Obscure*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *Two on a Tower*, *Return of the Native* (The)

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AUTHOR

GILDAS LEMARDELÉ

Université de Caen Basse-Normandie

Doctorant