In Tennyson's Victorian pastoral, the poet explores emotional choices through types of figural language. But in exploring the rhetoric of tradition, Tennyson subverts conventional pastoral forms in ways both radical and new. Pastoral has always taken, as part of its subject, song and the play of language. But Tennyson foregrounds the play of language in pastoral to lay bare the irony in his relation to tradition. In Tennyson, the subversion of pastoral forms works as a commentary on his sense of exclusion from the rhetoric of tradition.

Each time we return to the pastoral poetics of Tennyson, we are struck by the way melancholia of voice works by means of the poet/speaker's exile from a textual community. We observe Tennyson using figural language that pastoral poetics informs but that also turns from these informing traditions. Melancholy becomes not simply the psychological stigmata of the human figure within the poem, but the poet's response to a sense of placelessness within the language of his text. Each poem constitutes a literary palimpsest within which the poet's voice cannot find itself, but rather is lost within the web of textual echoes which he has constructed.

Irony comes into play. Tennyson as pastoral shepherd may complicate our attitude toward the act of mourning in *In Memoriam*; the relation between pastoral strategies and the pastoral figure as poet undoubtedly does complicate our response to a poem such as "Mariana." The taxonomy of pastoral tropes Mariana employs in her love-lament makes a "straightforward," non-ironic reading highly problematic. We recognize Mariana's problem, the literal repetition of her search, as the poet's. And if Mariana's problem projects a broader and deeper awareness of the poet's relation to tradition, how must we read "Demeter and Persephone"? Tenny-
son's mythological forays implicate the poet within the turns of language's error. Persephone's journey through Milton's Enna bears witness to a disruption of poetic texts, a subversion of pastoral forms, as violent and transformative as her ravishment and descent to the underworld. "Demeter and Persephone" maps out the generic wanderings of the poet, while demonstrating Tennyson's transformation of the rhetoric of tradition through figurative error.

After Tennyson, Hardy's rhetorical wanderings seem to stay closer to home. Hardy's pastoral poetry appears more domestic, less mythically adventurous, than Tennyson's. But like Tennyson, Hardy explores the rhetoric of tradition as it imposes its constraints and inhibitions on his poetic work. And like Tennyson, Hardy enables these rhetorical constraints and inhibitions to emerge as figural error and thus, to subvert and renew pastoral forms. No less than Tennyson's "Demeter and Persephone," Hardy's "In Front of the Landscape" reveals an allegory of the poet's exile and exclusion from a rhetorical community constituted by the texts of pastoral tradition. The decomposition of Hardy's pastoral spaces works through the disfiguration of pastoral rhetoric. Both Tennyson and Hardy situate poet figures within a decomposing nature that functions as an analogue to the foregrounding of pastoral rhetoric as the means to its own dissolution.

In the last chapter, we saw similar types of exclusion and constraint within Hardy's house of tradition. Hardy's country house is itself a type of pastoral figure, and one that bears a strong relation to the pastoral retreat in Tennyson. Mariana's pastoral space sets forth the boundaries of poetic repetition as one of the inhibitions imposed on the poet by tradition. The pastoral space she inhabits functions as a metonymy for the rhetoric of tradition out of which she cannot escape. Hardy's country houses present an analogous structure of the inhibiting boundaries of pastoral rhetoric, figured forth by the houses themselves, and their potential subversion by the spectral poet figures who haunt them. In both Tennyson and Hardy, we observe poet figures burdened by a traditional rhetoric of repressive force, the duplicity of which they exploit to overturn the forms of their own literary confinement.