

# *The Mayor of Casterbridge:* Human Suffering in the Victorian Patriarchy

Jung-Sun Choi

## Contents

- |  |
|--|
| I . Introduction                                       |
| II . Female Characters and the Victorian Patriarchy    |
| III . Male Characters and Hardy's Concern for Humanity |

## I . Introduction

Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886) has been criticized in two directions, the universal and the particular. The first examines the place of the individual life in a hostile or indifferent world, its destiny and limitation, broadly speaking, man's place in Nature. Thus, it focuses on the concepts such as coincidence, nature, destiny, and cosmic irony in relation with Hardy's pessimism. The second investigates the aspect that each character is the product of social and economic conditions, specifically, that of the Dorset region in England during industrialization. It delves into how characters are constructed, influenced by this specific region.

In this sense Elaine Showalter's criticism of this work, "the unmanning of *the Mayor of Casterbridge*," deserves our attention, because it analyses masculinity and femininity of characters in the work from the feminist point of view, compared with the traditional criticism, which emphasizes

the determinism of the work. Considering the importance of the relation of man and woman in the work, her criticism is significant in that it turns the focus of Hardy's criticism into one of his important aspects, namely, masculinity and femininity, which has been neglected by almost all critics.<sup>1)</sup> However, although her criticism initiates the feminist interpretation of the work, we can also find some limitation in her criticism in trying to understand characters comprehensively. She mainly focuses on the vicissitude of masculinity and femininity in the hero, Michael Henchard. Assuming that femininity is "observation, attention, sensitivity, and compassion" (114), she concludes that Henchard's maturity is achieved through obtaining these attributes of femininity; for her, Henchard's maturity is in accord with "his unmaning of masculinity" (109). As Patricia Ingham has pointed out, her interpretation is centered around abstract concepts of femininity such as observation, sensitivity, and compassion (4-5). By doing so, her interpretation overlooks an important aspect of the relation between men and women in the work. That is, conceptualizing the abstract and traditional view of woman—which she labelled femininity—she seems to pass over the essential issue, i.e., the characters' relationship with the Victorian patriarchy.

Whatever Hardy's intention of this work might be, however, it is certain that this work demonstrates the panorama of how characters are influenced, distorted, and destroyed by the Victorian patriarchy. That is to say, all major characters—not only women (Susan, Lucetta, and Elizabeth-Jane), but also men (Henchard and Donald Farfrae)—suffer from the Victorian patriarchy, whether they are conscious of it or not. It is difficult to jump to the conclusion that his aim of this work is to delineate the tragedy of men and women under the Victorian patriarchy. However, one of the most important aspects of this work is to illuminate characters'

---

1) Some critics also point out this aspect of Showalter's criticism. For example, see Anne Z. Mickelson 1-3; Penny Boumelha 122-35.

relationship with the Victorian patriarchy. It is evident in that the wife-selling in the first chapter determines the destinies of all characters throughout the work. Furthermore, if we approach this work from this point of view, we can arrive at understanding the inconsistency of the narrator's viewpoint of the work. In this sense this essay will investigate how Victorian patriarchy influences and distorts the lives of characters in the work. In dealing with this problem, it will also examine the characters many traditional or feminist critics tend to overlook, namely, Lucetta and Farfrae. Finally, this analysis will be able to solve the problem of inconsistency of the narrator's viewpoint of this work.

## II. Female Characters and the Victorian Patriarchy

In terms of the Victorian patriarchy, the most conspicuous character is Susan because she is a typical victim of the patriarchal ideology. The relationship between Susan and Henchard demonstrates the essence of the relationship between man and wife in the Victorian age. Between them there is a "total absence of conversation" (4).<sup>2)</sup> Her husband is only "her present owner" (8); she is only "an article" (7) belonging to him. Naturally, marriage is a disaster to her. This aspect of their relationship is exemplified in the scene of the auction of Susan at Weydon-Priors Fair.

In ten minutes the man broke in upon the desultory conversation of the furmity drinkers with, 'I asked this question, and nobody answered to 't. Will Jack Rag or Tom

---

2) Citations to the work are from Thomas Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Ed. Jameson K. Robinson, New York: Norton, 1977.

Straw among ye buy my goods? . . . 'Mike, Mike,' said she; 'this is getting serious. O!—too serious!' 'Will anybody buy her?' said the man. 'I wish somebody would,' said she firmly, 'her present owner is not at all to her liking!' . . . The woman, however, did stand up. 'Now, who's auctioneer?' cried the hay-trusser. (9-10)

In drunkenness Henchard declares that she is his "goods" (8). Yet she does not resist his shameful declaration, and simply accepts her "new owner" (8); she believes that, in paying five guineas for her, Richard Newson has legitimized their relationship. In fact, however, wife-selling was not recognized by the English in those days. As Showalter points out, Hardy never intended wife-selling to seem natural or probable, although he assembled factual accounts of such occurrences from the *Dorset County Chronicle* and the *Brighton Gazette* (102).

Then, why does Hardy depict this auction in his work, still more, in the first chapter of the novel? Irving Howe says that this auction represents Hardy's "male fantasy" to "shake loose from one's wife; to discard that drooping rag of a woman, with her mute complaints and maddened passivity" (384). Let us recall, however, the following facts: the scene of the auction is the first chapter, and this auction is the starting point of the distortion and destruction of all characters' destinies, particularly the catastrophe of Henchard's destiny. To these problems, Howe's psychoanalytic insight cannot provide any conclusive evidence. Rather it might be said that, through this scene Hardy intends to show the catastrophic result of the Victorian patriarchy. The destructive influence of this auction to each character reveals this point clearly.

What is more tragic to Susan is that she must return to Henchard when she becomes "a free woman again" (20) due to the supposed death of Newson who bought her. The primary reason of her return is that she has

no way to deliver Elizabeth–Jane and herself from poverty and difficulty. What is more, she has nothing to support both of them. This fact reflects the economic condition of women under the Victorian patriarchy. As is well known, in the Victorian age, women had no right to own their property in a practical sense, and it was almost impossible for women to find her own job to support herself and her family (Mickelson 70–72). The poor woman must have had more difficulty to find a way to support herself and her family. In this respect, Susan has no way but to find her first husband to survive.

At any rate, the propriety of returning to him, if he lived, was unquestionable. The awkwardness of searching for him lay in enlightening Elizabeth, a proceeding which her mother could not contemplate. She finally resolved to undertake the search without confiding to the girl her former relations with Henchard, leaving it to him if they found him to take what steps he might choose to that end. (21)

Hardy seems to be very critical of these circumstances. It is evident in the following tone of the narrator, Hardy's mouthpiece. "To pocket her pride and search for the first husband seemed, wisely or not, the best initiating step" (21). What a humiliating life it is, when she says that "I am quite in your hands, Michael" (57), recognizing that she has no way but to return to the husband that sold her! Though she has been married to Henchard twice, she has never been happy, and eventually dies miserably. Moreover, even her last request is completely ignored by Henchard. When Susan dies, she requests to Henchard that her will not be opened until Elizabeth–Jane's wedding day. As soon as she dies, however, he tears open the envelope. It only leads to his calamity; the cause of his loss of Elizabeth–Jane by his recognition that Elizabeth–Jane is not his own

daughter, but Newson's.

While Susan is too submissive and commits her total being to her husband—in this sense, she represents the typical example of the ordinary submissive woman under the Victorian patriarchy—Lucetta is independent, and, still more, struggles to escape from the boundary the Victorian patriarchy stipulates. In contrast to the ordinary women of that time, she is "terribly careless of appearance" (61) the Victorian patriarchy demands and tries to "arrange herself her own way" (120). She also forms relationship with others from her own choice or will. She even has the courage to choose Farfrae as her husband after she finds out Henchard's "hot-tempered and stern" (136) character. This is clearly illustrated in the following description:

He had hardly gone down the staircase when she dropped upon the sofa and jumped up again in a fit of desperation. 'I will love him!' she cried passionately, 'as for him—he's hot-tempered and stern, and it would be madness to bind myself to him knowing that. I won't be a slave to the past—I'll love where I choose!' (136)

Nonetheless, her fate is not determined by her own will but from patriarchal ideology and surroundings. When Henchard suddenly sinks into a gloomy fit in Jersey without anyone to attend on, she nurses him from her own compassion, but it becomes a scandal which "was of course ruin to her" (61). Although she is innocent, many people around her who regard her as "a coquette" (126) doubt her virtue. As revealed in the descriptions of her character, she is not a weak person like Susan. She is strong enough even to display a certain power of decision in leaving the Channel Islands to seek out her lukewarm lover, Henchard. Though at first Henchard had thought to buy her off or condescendingly honor her when she comes to

him, she soon discovers that she is more than a match for him. Even Henchard's blackmail in the Roman amphitheatre fails to crush her.

Even a woman like Lucetta, however, cannot endure the severity of the Victorian patriarchy: when the scandal spreads in Jersey, even though she is innocent, she has a sense of shame and disgrace, and at last she becomes the victim of the skimmity-ride, the representative symbol of the Victorian patriarchy.<sup>3)</sup> Actually, the skimmity-ride becomes the direct cause of her tragic death after her short marriage to Farfrae. That is to say, the Victorian patriarchy destroys the suspect who seems to violate the principle of "the angel of house" and "the treasure of virtue." In this sense, we can say that she is also victimized by the conventional Victorian patriarchy.

Compared with the two characters discussed above, in relation to the Victorian patriarchy, Elizabeth-Jane shows a more complicated aspect. In case of Susan and Lucetta, their responses to the Victorian patriarchy are rather simple: for Susan, total submission; for Lucetta, denial and escape.<sup>4)</sup> On the other hand, Elizabeth-Jane keeps double attitudes to the Victorian patriarchy. In this sense it could be said that Hardy represents the three characters' relationship with the Victorian patriarchy dynamically and complicatedly, conceptualizing exactly how the characters respond to the Victorian patriarchy.

Internally, Elizabeth-Jane has many attributes the Victorian age forbids toward woman. The most conspicuous example is her ambition for "struggling for enlargement" (20). For it, she continues the "self-imposed task . . . with painful laboriousness" (101); "when she walked abroad she

---

3) Skimmity-ride is a mocking procession in which effigies reveal a wife's faithlessness in the Victorian society. This was conducted to punish the women who were regarded as unfaithful ones. See Hardy 198.

4) This may result from the fact that, as Boumelha points out, Susan and Lucetta are small characters, compared with Elizabeth-Jane (46).

seemed to be occupied with an inner chamber of ideas, and to have slight need for visible objects" (73). Moreover, she has a desire to make herself in her own way irrelevant to the demand of male society. Her handwriting of "a line of chain-shot and sand-bags" (100) like that of men's shows her desire to set herself in her own way. In some circumstances she even abandons the lady's "respectability" which the Victorian patriarchy designates as the first virtue of woman. But unlike Lucetta, she is circumspect in showing this kind of attributes of hers. She lives as "a dumb, deep-feeling, great-eyed creature" (102), because she is an "experienced sage" (133) to know the result if she is not cautious. She has the ability to cope with the Victorian patriarchy and compromise with it.

Then, where do her double attitudes come from? According to the narrator, Hardy's mouthpiece, it is possible because she is "an accurate observer" (69). Throughout the novel, she observes all characters discreetly. For example, when she sees Henchard and Farfrae she quickly detects "Henchard's tigerish affection" (69) for Farfrae hidden behind their relation. To this attribute of hers, the narrator says as follows: "Elizabeth-Jane, being out of the game, and out of the group, could observe all from afar, like the evangelist who had to write it down" (139). Therefore, she can easily keep the domestic attitude the Victorian patriarchy demands if it is needed. We can see the representative example in the scene when she changes her dialects into the language of "the truly genteel" (99). When Henchard discovers that she uses "occasional pretty and picturesque use of dialect words" (99), he feels anger in shame for her, and reprimands her, because his creed is that it is not adapted to the language of genteel lady which the Victorian patriarchy demands. At his anger and reprimand, Elizabeth-Jane quickly realizes that she must be obedient because she knows his character. In this respect we can



understand why the narrator calls Elizabeth–Jane "this discerning silent witch" (132). Owing to this attitude, men around Elizabeth–Jane evaluate her highly, which leads to her success in marrying Farfrae.

Hardy's depiction of her coping with the Victorian patriarchy demonstrates his accurate perception of the dynamic relationship between the Victorian women and patriarchal ideology. It is evident in Hardy's portrayal of Elizabeth–Jane's moral judgement. In keeping her reputation and succeeding under the Victorian patriarchy, her moral judgement is helpful to her. That is, in addition to the ability to keep double attitudes toward the Victorian patriarchy, she also has the moral judgement of the Victorian age, which makes her adapt herself to the Victorian patriarchy. We can see this moral judgment of hers in how she thinks when she finds out the relation of Lucetta with Henchard. As she finds out their hidden relation, she says that Lucetta should marry Henchard or live by herself:

'Have you not lately renewed your promise?' said the younger with quiet surmise. She had divined Man Number One. 'That was wrung from me by a threat.' 'Yes, it was. But I think when any one gets coupled up with a man in the past so unfortunately as you have done, she ought to become his wife if she can, even if she were not the sinning party.' (165)

It means that she has the moral judgement which the Victorian patriarchy demands of women. The narrator comments ironically on this as follows: "Any suspicion of impropriety was to Elizabeth–Jane like a red rag to a bull. Her craving for correctness of procedure was, indeed, almost vicious" (165). Hardy ironically suggests that her Victorian moral judgement plays an important role in her success against the Victorian patriarchy, along with her double attitude toward it.

Then, is she not a victim of the Victorian patriarchy? It seems that

Hardy represents Elizabeth-Jane is also a victim of the Victorian patriarchy in some sense. It is exemplified in her attitude toward her marriage with Farfrae. After Lucetta's death she is married to Farfrae. It may be true that she loves him, but as Jagdish Dave regards her marriage as her "resignation" to survive and live in peace (66),<sup>5)</sup> her marriage has another aspect apart from love. Thus the narrator says, "marriage was as a rule no dancing matter" (248). It means that to her, marriage is an inevitable choice for her to make so that she may live in this male society. We can see this aspect in the narrator's comments as follows: she "arrived at a promising haven from at least the grosser troubles of her life" (252).

Therefore, it is inevitable that her view of life can never be bright. It is revealed in her attitude when she sees Henchard's bitter will after his death. At the sight of his will, she only says in a tragic tone: "But there's no altering—so it must be" (255). In other words, to her, life is always something painful and sad. In this respect, it could be said that she is also a victim of the Victorian patriarchy, although she is not victimized specifically in the novel. We can see this point more clearly as the narrator says that she thinks she must have "the field-mouse fear of the coulter of destiny" under these circumstances (67).

### Ⅲ. Male Characters and Hardy's Concern for Humanity

Interestingly, Hardy's depiction of male characters also illuminates how they are the victims of the Victorian patriarchy. Despite the victimization

---

5) Some critics including Dave criticize this marriage in terms of Hardy's tragic vision of life. In this regard her marriage represents the expression of human tragedy of resignation and submission. For more detail, see Dave 65-70.

of the female characters, the male characters are never the beneficiaries of Victorian patriarchy in *the Mayor of Casterbridge*. The most typical example is portrayed in Henchard's case. In the beginning of the novel, he is revealed as the perfect agent of the Victorian patriarchy. His relationship with his wife appears only as the relationship between a lord and a slave. He speaks to his wife only when he needs to, and he avoids all possible conversations by "reading or pretending to read" (2). Furthermore, in order to confirm his ownership to her, he sometimes threatens her that he will sell her. At last such relationship between them reaches its climax in his wife-selling in Weydon Fair-field. By selling his wife with his daughter, he blandishes his patriarchal power over her. But ironically, it eventually causes his consecutive catastrophes.

Henchard symbolizes the Victorian patriarchal ideology in the work in that he completely leads his life the Victorian patriarchy demands of men. It is no coincidence that he indulges himself only in searching after financial success and title, the "mythology of manliness" that the Victorian patriarchy requires to men (Showalter 105-06). He achieves these things through male competition in that time. But coincidentally, his success leads to his loneliness because what he wants is only a "greedy exclusiveness" (224). Furthermore, he fails to make true relationship with others because he continues to show "the tendency to domineer" (69).

His obsession to the Victorian patriarchy sometimes makes him even comical. This is exemplified in the narrator's tone toward his attitude of "haughty indifference to the society of womanhood, his silent avoidance of converse with the sex" (63). He sometimes regrets his act of wife-selling, for he thinks that he violates the basic principle of humanity through it. He, however, avoids his responsibility for his act by imputing it to his evening drunkenness, i.e., his temporary loss of reason. He even passes over his responsibility to Susan's ignorance and simplicity: "why

didn't she know better than bring me into this disgrace! . . . 'Tis like Susan to show such idiotic simplicity" (14).

All his patriarchal acts and thinking, however, eventually cause his destruction. To begin with, his social and domestic loneliness which his patriarchal act and thinking produce, leads to his illness and depression; his encounter with Lucetta—a part of the sources of his catastrophe—happens in this illness. Furthermore, this loneliness even makes him feel himself in the hell:

'Well, one autumn when stopping there I fell quite ill, and in my illness I sank into one of those gloomy fits I sometimes suffer from, on account o' the loneliness of my domestic life, when the world seems to have the blackness of hell, and, like Job, I could curse the day that gave me birth.' (60)

Nonetheless his conduct to women and men continue to be patriarchal, i.e., manipulative and proprietary. It may be true that the most important and direct cause of his catastrophe is his wife—selling, but his deceiving Elizabeth—Jane in the masquerade of the second courtship; his ignoring Susan's instruction not to open her will until Elizabeth—Jane's wedding; his threatening to blackmail Lucetta, all his trades in women become the direct causes of his catastrophe. He eventually precipitates into a failure, and loses everything: he becomes bankrupt, loses his honor of mayorship, and is deserted even by Elizabeth—Jane.<sup>6)</sup>

What is more important, however, is that in the process of his downfall he shows the aspect of discarding his patriarchal attitude, and sometimes regaining his humanity. The scene of the loft may be the representative

---

6) Some critics criticize Henchard's loss in terms of Shakespeare's *King Lear*. For example, Geoffrey Harvey notes Henchard's similarity to Shakespeare's *King Lear* in relation to his loss of his daughter (71).

example. After he is defeated by Farfrae on the loft, he declares love for the first time to another person, and accepts the meaning of victory of the weak. His desperate lies to Newson clearly demonstrate how Henchard changes; how he becomes dependent upon ties of love. Concerning this process of his change, Showalter estimates that Henchard regains his humanity through discovering "his long-repressed feminine side of himself" (112). Showalter says that Henchard's maturity is in accord with his "unmanning" process, and he reaches into maturity in the conclusion in which he loses all his manliness.

This interpretation, however, raises one problem: how can we interpret Henchard's will which is full of bitterness and sarcasm in the conclusion? For his death, Henchard leaves the terrible will that includes a kind of curse to himself and the world. How can it be possible for a man of maturity to leave such a will? Considering this will, it could be more convincing to say that Henchard's maturity is not reached unlike Showalter's interpretation. In this respect, Henchard is, presumably, the most tragic of all characters because he cannot even succeed in his growing into maturity despite losing all his manliness. In this sense we can say that he is also the victim of the Victorian patriarchy.

As far as Farfrae is concerned, superficially he seems to be perfect in many points at first. He is "cordial and impassioned" (42), and there is no domineering attitude around him like Henchard. He does not appear to be even affected by the Victorian patriarchy to the extent that Showalter looks upon him as "feminine at first" (107). It is natural that he "takes possession of the hearts of everyone" in the work (41). This is evident in the scene of the Three Mariners when everyone there applauds him when he sings to them. These aspects of his are contrasted with Henchard's first appearance of wife-selling in the work.

He, however, changes after he plunges himself into the male competition

in Casterbridge. This is demonstrated in his competition with Henchard. It is natural that between the two, contests of manliness take place: the strife for the priority of the grain industry; for Lucetta's love; for Elizabeth-Jane's love; eventually for the honor of mayorship. The scene of the wrestling-match between the two illuminates their strife symbolically. In the strife Farfrae wins with the help of his merits discussed above. Although Henchard tries to reassert his manliness, and rebuild his diminished stature by re-attacking Farfrae, the scene of the welcoming ceremonies for the Royal Personage reveals Henchard's efforts and ultimate failure comically. Through the scene of the loft Henchard's defeat becomes indubitable.

What we must not overlook here, is that through these male contests Farfrae also gradually loses his cherished merits. He degenerates from a jovial, open-minded, and compassionate man into an unfeeling, merely shrewd businessman; he becomes more rigid, and in Showalter's terms "masculinized" (111). We can see this clearly in the narrator's evaluation of him as "a much-sobered man" as he becomes a successful businessman and mayor (248). He even demonstrates the cruel aspect of giving up the search for the missing Henchard because it means wasting the night from home and "that will make a hole in a sovereign" (253).

It is certain that, at the conclusion of the novel he superficially succeeds in every aspect, contrasting with Henchard. But can we say that he is a true winner? Although all successes—fortune, mayorship, and Elizabeth-Jane—are with him, he also loses his precious merits, and another invisible contest of manliness is always waiting for him. Actually, it cannot be asserted that he gains Elizabeth-Jane's love in a true sense, because as Douglass Brown points out, Elizabeth-Jane chooses him partly because he is respectable and educated (18-19). Neither can we affirm that he is a winner when at the conclusion she thinks "happiness was but

the occasional episode in a general drama of pain" (256). In this respect, it could be said that Farfrae is another victim of the Victorian patriarchy.

In this sense it could be concluded that this work vividly demonstrates how the Victorian patriarchy influences and distorts male and female characters. That is, through approaching this novel from the viewpoint of the characters' relationship with the Victorian patriarchy, it is possible for us to get to the kernel of the novel. Nevertheless, we must not jump to the conclusion that Hardy truly feels resistant to the Victorian patriarchy and has compassion for the women's movement of that time. In fact, Showalter points out that in many respects Hardy rejected the women's movement of the 1890's, though his works have much meaning from a feminist point of view (101–02). In 1892 he refused to be a member of the Women's Progressive Society because he could not accept the Society's first object, women's suffrage (Bailey 56). In this respect, as A.O.J. Cockshut has pointed out, the effort to estimate Hardy as a feminist "is altogether vain" (129). This is clearly revealed in the fact that, as Michael Millgate points out that for Hardy, Elizabeth–Jane is "the touchstone" of the work, Hardy's mouthpiece (230), the narrator continues to agree with Elizabeth–Jane's attitude toward the Victorian patriarchy. The narrator even accepts Elizabeth–Jane's resignation to the Victorian patriarchal society as the Victorian domestic wisdom. It means that Hardy's attitude toward the solution of the Victorian patriarchy is in agreement with that of Elizabeth–Jane's, i.e. resignation.

Nonetheless, in the work Hardy vividly draws the terrible effects of the Victorian patriarchy and investigates its meaning. Then, how is it possible for Hardy to draw the characters under the Victorian patriarchy so vividly? Where does Hardy's insight come from? As Noorul Hasan points out, it must come from his "profound tenderness and concern for mankind" (59), rather than from his feminism. That is, his compassion for the male and

female suffering produces such brilliant expression in the work.

In this sense, approaching the narrative of the work from this concern for humanity of Hardy's, we can find the clue to the inconsistency of the narrator's viewpoint. At first the narrator develops much of the story from the viewpoint of women, particularly, that of Elizabeth-Jane's. Therefore, Elizabeth-Jane appears as an observer and explainer of the story. This is why many episodes including the explanation of Henchard, Farfrae, and Lucetta are explained by Elizabeth-Jane's viewpoint. After Henchard's change begins, however, the narrator unfolds the story from Henchard's viewpoint. Elizabeth-Jane as an observer and explainer does not appear. After the latter part of the work, we see incidents through Henchard's eyes. He "observes even Elizabeth-Jane" (264), just as Elizabeth-Jane had observed or reflected on men and scenes before.

Concerning this narration, Robert B. Heilman claims that Hardy is inconsistent at the narrator's viewpoint (10-11). However, considering that the narrator's viewpoint changes after Henchard is more humanized, the narrator's change of viewpoint represents Hardy's concern for humanity, rather than the inconsistency of the viewpoint of the narrator. This is more evident in that the narrator continues to pity or sympathize with the characters' suffering. The narrator pities even selfish Henchard in the first part: "he might well have been pitied" (109). That is to say, by manipulating the narrator's relationship to the characters, namely, assimilation with them and distance from them, which makes the narrative seemingly inconsistent, Hardy vividly illustrates the characters' suffering and his concern for them. It is at this point that we can say that Hardy is a great writer interested in humanity, going beyond the level of a feminist writer in the political sense.



## WORKS CITED

- Bailey, John. *An Essay on Hardy*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1978.
- Boumelha, Penny. *Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form*. Brighton: Harvester, 1982.
- Brown, Douglas. *Thomas Hardy: The Mayor of Casterbridge*. New York: Barron's, 1962.
- Cockshut, A. O. J. *Man and Woman: A Study of Love and the Novel 1740–1940*. New York: Oxford UP, 1978.
- Dave, Jagdish C. *The Human Predicament in Hardy Novels*. London: Macmillan, 1985.
- Hardy, Thomas. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Ed. James K. Robinson. New York: Norton, 1977.
- Harvey, Geoffrey. *The Complete Critical Guide to Thomas Hardy*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Hasan, Noorul. *Thomas Hardy: The Sociological Imagination*. London: Macmillan, 1982.
- Heilman, Robert B. Introduction. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Ed. Robert B. Heilman. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962. v–xxxviii.
- Howe, Irving. "The Struggles of Men." Ed. James K. Robinson. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. New York: Norton, 1977. 384–98.
- Ingham, Patricia. *Thomas Hardy*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989.
- Mickelson, Anne Z. *Thomas Hardy's Women and Men: The Defeat of Nature*. Metuchen: Scarecrow, 1976.
- Millgate, Michael. *Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist*. New York: Random House, 1971.
- Showalter, Elaine. "The Unmanning of The Mayor of Casterbridge." *Critical Approach to the Fiction of Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Dale Kramer. London: Macmillan, 1979. 101–18.

Turner, Paul. *The Life of Thomas Hardy: A Critical Biography*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

Abstract

***The Mayor of Casterbridge:*  
Human Suffering in the Victorian Patriarchy**

Jung-Sun Choi

This essay aims to investigate the major characters' relationship with the Victorian patriarchy, that is, how the Victorian patriarchy influences and distorts the lives of major characters—not only women (Susan, Lucetta, and Elizabeth-Jane), but also men (Henchard and Farfrae)—in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. In dealing with this problem, it especially focuses on examining the characters many traditional or feminist critics have overlooked, namely, Lucetta and Farfrae. This article also attempts to solve the problem of inconsistency of the narrator's viewpoint of this work.

In the work Hardy demonstrates his concern for humanity, vividly representing how male characters as well as female characters are victimized by the Victorian patriarchy. It can be said that the narrator's change of viewpoint is closely related to Hardy's concern for humanity, rather than to the inconsistency of the viewpoint of the narrator. By manipulating the narrator's relationship to the characters, namely, assimilation with them and distance from them, which makes the narrative seemingly inconsistent, Hardy vividly illustrates the characters' suffering and his concern for them. It is at this point that we can say Hardy is a great writer interested in humanity, going beyond the level of a feminist writer in the political sense.

**Key Words:** Thomas Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Victorian patriarchy, masculinity, femininity, suffering, humanity

토마스 하디, 『캐스터브리지의 읍장』, 빅토리아시대의 가부장제, 남성성, 여성성, 고통, 인간애

논문접수일: 2011. 05. 18

심사완료일: 2011. 05. 26

게재확정일: 2011. 05. 27

이름: 최정선

소속: 한경대학교 영어학과

주소: (456-749) 경기도 안성시 중앙로 167 한경대학교 영어학과

이메일: jsch95@hknu.ac.kr