Rape and Its Representation: "Male Myths of Rape" and English Literature, Part Two

Kaoruko SAKATA

Accepted June 6, 2007

Abstract : "Rape and Its Representation: 'Male Myths of Rape' and English Literature" will explore how English literature has contributed to the formation and development of what Susan Brownmiller calls "male myths of rape". This essay, "Rape and Its Representation: 'Male Myths of Rape' and English Literature, Part Two", will mainly examine Tess of the d'Urbervilles (1891) and "The Company of Wolves" in The Bloody Chamber (1979). When Thomas Hardy represented rape as relations between the sexes wherein the woman might have consented to the male's advances and was therefore disqualified from being called a victim, the "male myths of rape" gathered momentum. When Angela Carter made the woman the seducer and the man the victim in relations between the sexes, the "male myths of rape" seemed thoroughly justified.

Key words : Susan Brownmiller, "male myths of rape", Tess of the d'Urbervilles, A Passage to India, "The Company of Wolves"

抄録：「レイプとその表象 II レイプ神話」とイギリス文学は、スーザン・ブラウンミラーが「レイプ神話」と呼ぶレイプに関する通常の形成と発展に、イギリス文学がどのように貢献してきたかを考察することを目的としている。本稿「レイプとその表象 II レイプ神話」とイギリス文学（2）では、十九世紀のトマス・ハーディの著した『ダーバヴォル家のテス』および二十世紀のアンジェラ・カーターの著した『狼たちの群れ』を中心に論じる。トマス・ハーディが『ダーバヴォル家のテス』において、レイプ事件を女性の同意が存在していた可能性のある男女関係として描いたとき、被害者である女性の自業自得を主張する『レイプ神話』はさらに前進する。そして『狼たちの群れ』では、レイプ事件において、誘ったのは女性であり、男性の方が男女関係における被害者として描かれることになり、『レイプ神話』は完全に正当化されたかのような様相を呈するに至る。

索引語：スーザン・ブラウンミラー、『レイプ神話』、『ダーバヴォル家のテス』、『インドへの道』、『狼たちの群れ』
Introduction: As a Summary of the Previous Essay

In order to follow up the previous essay, "Rape and Its Representation: 'Male Myths of Rape' and English Literature, Part One", this essay will continue to explore how English literature has contributed to the formation and development of the "male myths of rape" which Susan Brownmiller vehemently censures in her book, *Against Our Will* (1975)\(^1\). As examined in close detail in the previous essay, in *The History of Rome* by Livy (c. 59 B.C.-A.D. 17), Sextus's rape of Lucretia is recorded as the symbol of a power struggle between two men, and the distinction between good (Lucretia as an innocent victim) and evil (Sextus as a rapist) is clearly defined. When William Shakespeare retold the story in the sixteenth century, however, the cause of the rape was attributed to female sexuality; in the rewriting, while Tarquin remains the rapist, Lucretia becomes both an innocent victim and an unconscious temptress. In *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), therefore, the justification by the rapist, which strongly supports the "male myths of rape", can already be clearly discerned. Next, when Samuel Richardson depicted the rape of Clarissa in the eighteenth century, he contributed to the furtherance of the "male myths of rape" by making the victim a semi-conscious temptress who invites her own rape. Nevertheless, there is no textual evidence in *Clarissa or the History of a Young Lady* (1747-48) that allows readers to suppose that the relations between Clarissa and Lovelace occurred with the woman's consent. Although the story of the rape of Clarissa greatly furthers the "male myths of rape" by suggesting that Clarissa is partly responsible, the violation by Lovelace is still undeniably rape. However, a nineteenth-century novel, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), hints at the possibility of interpreting the violation by the rapist not as rape but as consensual intercourse, and attempts to eliminate any criminality from the act of rape. Thomas Hardy depicted truly ambiguous relations between the sexes by letting his text observe a strict silence concerning the matter in order not to reveal the truth at all: relations wherein the man can be both a rapist and a lover, and the woman both a victim and a mistress. The following chapter will show how Hardy helped the "male myths of rape" grow more convincing and indisputable than ever.

\(^1\) Hardy's Tess in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*: The Elimination of Criminality from the Act of Rape\(^2\)

1.1 Tess's Responsibility

When Shakespeare retold Livy's story of the rape of Lucretia as the rape of Lucrece, he focused on Tarquin's psychological conflict wherein Tarquin, knowing that his rape will be a violation of justice, cannot resist Lucrece's sexuality (lines 127-301); therefore, Sextus's rape of Lucretia was replaced with Lucrece's temptation of Tarquin (lines 477-504). In this respect, as was discussed in the previous essay, *The Rape of Lucrece* clearly shows the influence of Western Christian civilization, which openly condemns the woman's body and her sexuality for leading men on to commit immoral sexual intercourse against their will. This shift of responsibility for the act of rape, with the Christian way of evaluating female sexuality behind it, becomes more obvious in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* by Hardy. Western Christian civilization regards the body as something tainted and unclean, and people are biased toward attributing the cause of rape not to the man who commits the crime, but to the woman (and her body and sexuality) who is believed to have induced the act. Although Alec raped sixteen-year-
old Tess, when he meets her again several years later, he is totally enchanted by her mature beauty and suddenly starts to blame her for his own attraction to her, saying "Don't look at me like that!" (p. 388) and "it is better that I should not look too often on you. It might be dangerous" (p. 388). He even urges her to "swear that you will never tempt me by your charms or ways" (p. 390). Alec pushes the responsibility for his criminal act onto her "charms or ways" as if she had been responsible for the rape in the past. When the incident in the Chase is narrated from Alec's point of view, it is presented to readers not as rape wherein the woman is a victim, but as seduction whose blame should reside in the woman's sexuality.

1.2 Hardy's Textual Manipulation

Hardy furthers the "male myths of rape" by using two kinds of textual manipulation which enable Alec the rapist to justify himself in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. The first manipulation is his excessive description of Tess's sexuality and the second is the deliberate silence of the text concerning the incident in the Chase. Let us examine the excessive description of Tess's sexuality first. A narrator does not necessarily speak for an author, so it may be too hasty to conclude that the voice of the narration in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is that of Thomas Hardy; however, when proper attention is given to the fact that the narrator describes Tess's sexuality in great detail and sometimes at extraordinary length, the argument of some critics that the narrator must be a man seems very persuasive. It is not too much to say that whenever Tess appears in the text, the narrator never fails to describe her mouth and lips. It is nothing new to point out that in literary works, the mouth and lips tend to be used as a symbol of female sexuality; and it is significant that the narrator emphasizes how "red" (passim), "ripe" (p. 235) and "tempting" (p. 209) her mouth and lips are, and repeats their description more than seems necessary. For instance, Chapter II tells us how her deep red mouth pouts when Tess utters her dialect (pp. 51-52) and Chapter XIX tells us how her lips move when she smiles (p. 178). Even to the eye of Angel Clare, who is said to be the most "spiritual" (p. 257) and lacking in "animal" (p. 257) wants, Tess's lips (and therefore her sexuality) are madly attractive:

How very lovable her face was to him. Yet there was nothing ethereal about it; all was real vitality, real warmth, real incarnation. And it was in her mouth that this culminated....her mouth he had seen nothing to equal on the face of the earth. To a young man with the least fire in him that little upward lift in the middle of her red top lip was distracting, infatuating, maddening....Clare had studied the curves of those lips so many times that he could reproduce them mentally with ease: and now, as they again confronted him, clothed with colour and life, they sent an aura over his flesh, a breeze through his nerves, which wellnigh produced a qualm....his heart had outrun his judgment.... (pp. 208-10; emphasis Hardy's)

If her sexuality is "maddening" to a man "with the least fire in him" and can "outrun his judgment" when she herself is unconscious of the existence of the other sex, it cannot be anything but a fatal blow to her when she meets a debauchee like Alec, who has never been expected to get his sexual passions under control. Attractive as she is, Richardson's Clarissa, whose sexuality is not denied but never emphasized, is admired by the male characters as a spiritual being, like an angel. On the contrary, the red interior of Tess's mouth is compared to "a snake's" (p. 231). Hardy, the narrator and the text all maneuver to make her sexuality seem so seductive as to enable the rapist to justify his criminal act of rape, even if Tess herself does not intend to be seductive at all.
1.3 Hardy's Textual Manipulation ② : The Silence of the Text

Hardy's greatest textual manipulation lies in his not depicting the incident of rape in the Chase while it is happening and in his letting the text observe a strict silence whenever the text is duly expected to refer to the incident. Although it is still open to argument whether it is Hardy's primary intention to promote the "male myths of rape", there is no doubt that his textual manipulation results in furthering them. The text, which makes it unclear whether the incident is rape wherein the woman is a victim, or seduction for which the woman is responsible, definitely enables Alec to justify himself easily. First of all, while the incident is happening in Chapter XI, the narrator elaborates on his philosophy without depicting what is actually happening at all. Next, although Tess undoubtedly recounts the whole story of the incident in her confession to her mother in Chapter XII and to Angel in Chapter XXXIV, the text observes a strict silence. Moreover, in Chapter XXXIII, the text does not reveal what is written in her four-page confessional note to Angel, as it is not properly delivered to him. Furthermore, Tess's trial and her confession to the priest before the execution are tactfully omitted from the text. Consequently, to the end, the text never permits readers to know the real facts of the incident in the Chase.

Some critics such as Margaret Higonnet (pp. 26-27) ascribe Hardy's textual manipulation to the literary convention which did not dare to describe the socially taboo and the unspeakable. If they are right, however, in guessing that Hardy had to show some proper literary consideration by avoiding description of the act of rape itself in detail, he still surely made a great contribution to the development of the "male myths of rape" by not letting the text declare that the incident in the Chase is actually rape; that is, by making it unclear whether the incident in the Chase is an act of rape or consensual intercourse. It is true that Clarissa, wherein Lovelace just disposes of the matter with "The affair is over" (L.2575), gives no description of the act of rape itself at all, but the significant words in the subsequent letters such as "violation" (L.258), "robbing" (L.259) and "murder" (L.261) are sufficient to hint at the criminal act of rape. The very word "rape" appears in Letter 261. On the contrary, in Tess of the d'Urbervilles, the incident in the Chase is never ever referred to as "rape", and whenever there appears an expression suggestive of rape, the text never fails to hint at Tess's involvement in the act with her consent. To take one example, the conversation among the female agricultural laborers in Chapter XIV seems to assure readers of the criminal act of rape: "A little more than persuading had to do wi' the coming o't, I reckon. There were they that heard a sobbing one night last year in The Chase; and it mid ha' gone hard wi' a certain party if folks had come along" (p. 140). On the other hand, the irrefutable evidence that Tess stayed with Alec for several weeks following the incident in the Chase suggests that even if she did not willingly give herself to Alec, she consented to their subsequent relations. What Tess herself says to Alec's face and the narrator's subsequent explanation make it difficult for readers to understand their relations following the incident in the Chase:

"If I had gone for love o' you, if I had ever sincerely loved you, if I loved you still, I should not so loathe and hate myself for my weakness as I do now!...My eyes were dazed by you for a little, and that was all." (p. 125)

But her poor foolish mother little knew her present feeling towards this man. Perhaps it was unusual in the circumstances, unlucky, unaccountable; but there it was; and this, as she had said, was what made her detest herself. She had never wholly cared for him, she did not at all care for him now. She had dreaded him,
Rape and Its Representation: "Male Myths of Rape" and English Literature, Part Two

winced before him, succumbed to adroit advantages he took of her helplessness; then, temporarily blinded by his ardent manners, had been stirred to confused surrender awhile: had suddenly despised and disliked him, and had run away. That was all. Hate him she did not quite.... (p. 130)

Even though she was "dazed" and "blinded", the above passage insinuates that Tess accepted her relationship with Alec subsequent to the incident in the Chase of her own free will.

Moreover, in contrast to Clarissa wherein Lovelace's assertion that "the will, the consent, is wanting" (L261; emphasis Richardson's) assures readers that the violation by Lovelace was achieved while Clarissa was put into a drugged sleep, and therefore without her consent; not one of the characters in Tess of the d'Urbervilles, including Tess herself, testifies to her innocence. In the three-volume first edition in 1891, while Alec refers to his act as "the wrong" (p. 315), which can be interpreted as the act of rape, he consistently insists that Tess is a temptress. As the following quotation from the same edition shows, Alec refers to Tess as a "victim", but at the same time, by stating that Tess "withdrew" herself from him, Alec intimates that Tess consented to their relations for some time:

"...No, by my word and truth, I never despised you; if I had I should not love you now! Why I did not despise you was on account of your intrinsic purity in spite of all; you withdrew yourself from me so quickly and resolutely when you saw the situation; you did not remain at my pleasure; so there was one victim in the world for whom I had no contempt, and you are she...." (p. 323)

Furthermore, after being raped, Clarissa denounces Lovelace saying "Oh Lovelace, you are Satan himself" (L261); whereas, Tess tells Alec that "I never said you were Satan, or thought it. I don't think of you in that way at all" (p. 432). Their contrasting attitudes lead readers to imagine that the relationships within these two pairs are considerably different. As shown above, the textual silence helps to keep the relations between Tess and Alec ambiguous, allowing Alec to be both the rapist and Tess's lover, and Tess both the victim and Alec's mistress. As a result, some critics such as Laura Claridge (p. 67) and Shirley Stave (p. 103) feel encouraged to believe that Tess responded positively to Alec's sexual advances.

1.4 In the Contexts of Socio-cultural History ①: Law and Trials

It is true that to the end, the text observes a strict silence concerning the incident in the Chase, but what the same text "tells" makes it even more difficult to prove that the incident is rape. When compared with the laws relating to rape, rape trials at the time, and newspaper reports about them, what the text "tells" complicates the relationship between Tess and Alec, and makes it almost impossible to judge whether the incident in the Chase is rape or consensual intercourse.

The first consideration is Tess's age. According to Martin Wiener (pp. 113-14), although it is in 1885 that the Criminal Law Amendment Act raised the legal age of consent to sixteen, some rape convictions in the 1850s were already based on judicial instructions that up to the age of sixteen, a girl was not capable of consenting to intercourse. The description of the railroad in Dorset in Chapter XXX indicates to us that Tess of the d'Urbervilles is set at the earliest in 1857\(^6\). Even if it were set in the 1860s or the 1870s, that is, before the establishment of the
Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, at the time of the incident in the Chase in the fictional text, in some of the real courts, intercourse with a young girl under the age of sixteen was considered as rape. In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, however, when Tess meets Alec, she has just turned sixteen. In other words, she is of an age where she is regarded as having the ability to give her consent to intercourse with Alec. Hardy's choice as to his heroine's age is a subtle one which makes it more difficult to judge whether the woman is a victim or not.

The second consideration is to do with Tess's physical condition. Wiener (pp. 111-13) says that at a rape trial, when the woman had been insensible through intoxication, since the defendant was not able to prove that the plaintiff had agreed to his advances, intercourse was looked upon as rape. In the three-volume version in 1891, Tess is rendered unconscious after being forced to drink from "a druggist's bottle" (p. 72); however, in the one-volume edition in 1892 and onwards, the druggist's bottle has been removed, and Tess is not unconscious but in a deep sleep suffering from fatigue. By this change in its representation, the incident in the Chase has been altered from an explicit act of rape to intercourse which might have taken place with her consent. Because of this change, if Alec had been put on trial, Tess would have found it impossibly difficult to prove her innocence.

Thirdly, Tess's behavior subsequent to the incident in the Chase would have been detrimental to her case. Wiener (p. 83) says that unless the victim immediately reported the attack to the people who were around, a conviction was almost impossible to obtain. In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Tess not only did not complain about the rape but also stayed with Alec for some time. In this respect, at a rape trial in those days, Tess would have been at a disadvantage.

The fourth consideration, described by Ginger Frost, is that if the woman were thought to be "assertive" (p. 108), the case was sure to go against her: "Women who enjoyed sex and pursued it found juries largely unsympathetic to their claims for compensation" (p. 108). As it is an undeniable fact that Tess stayed with Alec for several weeks following the incident in the Chase, she seems to have accepted a sexual relationship with him. She, therefore, cannot help being judged as being assertive. Moreover, Kim Stevenson states that once the woman was thought to be "sexually assertive" (p. 93) and lost the case, she was no longer considered as a victim and people would begin to treat her as an "offender" (p. 93). It seems that Tess would have been put in an untenable position at a rape trial.

The fifth point concerns how Tess is related to Alec. According to Frost (p. 106) and Wiener (p. 101), "it was especially difficult to get a rape conviction if the woman were acquainted with her assailant" (Frost, p. 106). If "working women found it difficult to prove an assault against their employers" (Frost, p. 106), it seems natural that Tess did not report the assault to the police. On the one hand, not complaining to the police does not necessarily mean that one gave one's consent; on the other hand, compared with what books and research papers on the laws and the actual cases in those days tell us, the relationship between Tess and Alec, viewed from a third-party point, must have appeared to be not forced but consensual. The following argument in 1877 by an influential jurist which is reported in Wiener shows that the laws concerning rape would have been greatly biased against Tess if she had attempted to prove her innocence in court: "If a woman were not overmastered by drink or drugs, multiple attackers, or an unusually strong single assailant, 'there might be an attempt at rape; but actual rape is so nearly impossible that it should be accepted only on the most conclusive evidence'" (p. 121; emphasis in Wiener).
1.5 In the Contexts of Socio-cultural History: Capital Punishment to Homicide

Some consideration should be given to the fact that Tess is put to death as punishment for the crime of murdering Alec. According to Wiener (pp. 126-34), in strong contrast to trials of the eighteenth century, in trials concerning the murder of a former lover by a jilted woman or the murder of a husband by a wife in the nineteenth century, the emphasis was put on the brutality of the men, which was believed to have led to the crime, rather than on the seriousness of the women's offenses. As the public interest was centered on the sufferings of the accused woman, “[j]uries came almost invariably to recommend that the lives of female defendants be spared, virtually the only exceptions being when there were multiple victims” (p. 130). Wiener gives some instances of trials wherein even when the accused woman was found guilty of murder, her jury recommended her to mercy and she therefore won her reprieve. Compared with this investigation by Wiener, it seems that *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* does not reflect the contemporary social and judicial conditions at all, which raises doubts as to why Tess has to be executed. Moreover, Wiener points out that "the law was amended in 1836 to allow time after murder convictions for appeals for mercy to be considered" (p. 129) and as a result, "the hanging of women immediately became highly exceptional" (p. 129). As stated earlier, the description of the railroad in Dorset in Chapter XXX indicates to us that the setting of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is at the earliest in 1857; therefore, the law amendment in 1836 mentioned by Wiener is applicable to Tess's case. Tess is arrested at Stonehenge in May in Chapter LVIII and put to death in July in Chapter LIX, so there is a two-month grace period before the execution. Nevertheless, she is hanged. Compared with the contemporary social and judicial conditions examined by Wiener, readers are tempted to understand that Tess's crime leaves no room for sympathy and as a result she deserves no pardon. Sympathetic readers may believe that if the public knew how Tess's crime came about, compassion would be sure to arise and an appeal for mercy would be answered; however, neither compassion nor mercy is given to Tess. Tess's execution implies that both in public and in court, the seriousness of Tess's crime is perceived as surpassing Alec's atrocity. If Tess's sinfulness is more unpardonable than Alec's cruelty, then readers can only interpret the incident in the Chase, concerning which the text observes a total silence, not as rape but as consensual intercourse. With reference to the research done by scholars on the actual circumstances of the judicial execution in nineteenth-century England, it seems that Hardy meant to convince readers that the relations between Tess and Alec did not happen against her will.

1.6 In the Contexts of Socio-cultural History: Newspaper Coverage of Rape Trials

Lastly, attention should be paid to the relation between Hardy's excessive description of Tess's sexuality (which was examined in 1.2) and how the nineteenth-century mass media reported rape trials. According to Joanne Jones, who discusses the late nineteenth-century newspaper coverage of rape trials and its intention and effects:

Newspaper reporting assessed the measure of the victim's culpability and the extent to which she was considered to have solicited the violence directed against her, drawing from and perpetuating the notion that women possessed the power to provoke sexual violence in men. In directing their censure to the behaviour of the victims, the newspapers' narratives framed female sexuality as a recurrent threat to respectable masculinity, a threat against which all men must be ever vigilant. (p. 105)
The newspaper coverage of rape trials, by recycling stereotypes of male and female sexuality, mercilessly censured the victim for her inviting behavior and warned men against dangerous female sexuality. It would not be surprising if Hardy's excessive description of Tess's sexuality, which is similar to the strategies used by newspapers covering rape trials in those days, helped acquit Alec of the accusation of rape. By comparing them with the stereotypes of male and female sexuality in nineteenth-century England, Hardy made it easier to look upon the relations between Tess and Alec as consensual rather than as forced. While letting his text observe a strict silence concerning the actual incident in the Chase, Hardy shrewdly entices readers into doubting whether the woman is to blame for the occurrence of rape or whether the incident really is an act of rape as the woman insists. In this respect, Hardy rendered great service to the development of the "male myths of rape".

1.7 From Rape to Seduction
As we have examined so far, in Livy, Shakespeare and Richardson, what Sextus, Tarquin and Lovelace do is nothing less than rape, and Lucretia, Lucrece and Clarissa are most certainly the victims of rape; whereas, Hardy wrote of relations between the sexes in a way that does not deny the possibility of the woman's consent in an act of rape. With his textual manipulation which enables the elimination of the criminality from the act of rape, Hardy surely accelerated the development of the "male myths of rape". However, it is in "The Company of Wolves", a retelling of "Little Red Riding Hood" by Angela Carter, that the "male myths of rape" are augmented and, as it were, completed.

2. E. M. Forster's Passage to India: Alleged Rape
Before discussing "The Company of Wolves", it might be helpful to examine the alleged rape in A Passage to India (1924) by E. M. Forster in relation to the "male myths of rape". According to Kim Stevenson (pp. 99-100), in the 1880s, sexual danger was constructed as the national moral danger, and the concerns of Members of Parliament were focused not on female vulnerability to masculine sexual natures, but on the issues "where men might be subjected to the malicious accusations of women, or to the likelihood of corrupt and immoral girls leading men astray" (p. 100). This way of looking upon sexuality in the late nineteenth century is straightforwardly shown in A Passage to India, written in early twentieth-century England.

If it is difficult for women to prove that intercourse was against their will, then it is equally difficult for men to prove that intercourse was not a violation which lacked the women's consent. It is not difficult to imagine how terrified a man must feel when put on trial as a rapist though innocent, either because he did not have intercourse with the woman at all, or he firmly believed that the woman consented to having intercourse. If proper consideration is given, no one can mistake the great difference between the "male myths of rape", which attempt to justify the criminal act of rape, and the terror caused by a false accusation; nevertheless, the "male myths of rape" and the terror of being falsely accused can be strongly connected in that owing to the ambiguity of the judicial definition of rape, women can completely upset the fate of innocent men by claiming that intercourse occurred against their will. Brownmiller points out the inconsistency of "cultural messages" (p. 313) about femininity incessantly sent to us by popular culture which allows the "male myths of rape" to continue to exist:
"Sometimes the idea is floated that all women want to be raped and sometimes we hear that there is no such thing as rape at all, that the cry of rape is merely the cry of female vengeance in postcoital spite" (p. 313). Not only do the "cultural messages" censured by Brownmiller allow us to have a quick glance at the terror experienced by men who are falsely accused of rape, but they also disclose how convenient popular culture is for the rapists who play with the "male myths of rape". Read from this viewpoint, *A Passage to India* may be interpreted as supporting the "male myths of rape".

*A Passage to India*, by depicting an awkward situation where a man can be at any time falsely charged with rape, plays an indirect role in justifying the "male myths of rape". In a similar way to *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *A Passage to India* observes a strict silence concerning the actual incident of rape. The textual silence in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* makes it unclear whether the intercourse between Tess and Alec occurred against her will or with her consent; whereas, in *A Passage to India*, it is doubtful whether any sexual intimacy or attempted rape took place at all. According to Oliver Stallybrass's "Introduction" (p. 26) to the Penguin Edition, although Forster wrote in the manuscript that someone follows Adela into one of the Marabar Caves and attempts to assault her, he later deleted the description from the text. Stallybrass adds that Forster once explained in a letter in answer to the question, "what did happen in the caves?": "In the cave it is *either* a man, *or* the supernatural, *or* an illusion" (p. 26; emphasis Forster's). This explanation of Forster's enables readers to come to an interpretative conclusion that it is all a delusion on Adela's part. Forster's text will not tell us whether it is Dr. Aziz or a local guide who attempts to assault Adela, or if the attempted rape is only a delusion created by Adela's sexual frustration.

It should not be ignored that Forster's concern does not lie in disclosing the reality of rape trials in those days or in the details of "male myths of rape". By characterizing the victim of the attempted rape as an Englishwoman and the accused rapist as an Indian male, Forster seems to encourage readers to read the incident in the Marabar Caves as some metaphor for the early twentieth-century colonial tensions between the U.K. and India. Nonetheless, no matter what Forster's main concern is, it is undeniably Dr. Aziz in the dock who wins readers' sympathy, since Forster's description of the rape trial makes readers feel keenly a man's terror at being falsely accused rather than a woman's fear of being raped. As a result, *A Passage to India* takes sides with the "cultural messages" that most of the statements of rape by women are pure fabrications on their part. In this respect, *A Passage to India* shows us how English literature as popular culture has largely contributed toward making the "male myths of rape" plausible and thereby strengthening them in various ways.

### 3. Angela Carter's Little Red Riding Hood in "The Company of Wolves": From the Victim to the Temptress

#### 3.1 From the Victim to the Temptress

From Livy to Hardy — even though in Hardy's case textual manipulation makes it difficult to discern whether the incident is rape or seduction — there is no doubt that it is the women who suffer physically and mentally. Some readers may conclude that the relations between Clarissa and Lovelace and those between Tess and Alec came about by seduction rather than by rape, since they are convinced that Clarissa sets the stage for her own downfall and that Tess undermines her credibility by staying with her assailant for several weeks following the
incident. Nevertheless, in each text, it is the man not the woman who is referred to as a "seducer", and it is the man who always has charge of the situation. In "The Company of Wolves" by Angela Carter, however, it is the woman who tempts the man and the man can be seen as a victim in the relationship; thereby every hint of rape as a criminal act is eliminated from the text.

3.2 The Literary History of "Little Red Riding Hood"

First of all, it is helpful to know how the fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood" came to be read as a fable about rape. The following is a summary of the literary history of "Little Red Riding Hood" made by consulting the detailed studies by Alan Dundes, Jack Zipes and Catherine Orenstein. The oral folktale called "The Story of Grandmother" is believed to be the prototype of the fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood". A girl in this oral folktale escapes from a werewolf by going outdoors on the pretext of the urgent need to defecate, and while the werewolf is impatiently waiting inside for her return, she goes back home safely. This oral folktale does not necessarily require us to find any eroticism in the adventure story of a girl who is not yet made to wear the symbolic red cap. Nor are we required to draw any usual fairy-tale didactic moral which remonstrates with a heroine about her fault or weak point. In this original story, the heroine is wise, brave and independent. It is Charles Perrault who markedly transformed this archetypal girl. In his "Little Red Riding Hood" in Stories or Tales of Past Times (1697), the girl is made to wear a red cap. She easily falls prey to the wolf because she stops and listens to him, and dawdles in the woods. She undresses herself and gets into bed with the wolf as ordered. Then the wolf eats her and she dies. In Perrault's version, she does not get rescued. It is not too much to say that without reading Perrault's verse moral which concludes the tale, any reader can easily guess that the setting wherein Little Red Riding Hood undresses herself and goes to bed only to be devoured by the wolf implies, or is a metaphor for sexual intercourse. Perrault's Little Red Riding Hood can obviously be read as a victim of rape. As his verse moral preaches, his "Little Red Riding Hood" warns young girls not to trust men too easily.

The Brothers Grimm in the nineteenth century worked a further transformation on the image of Little Red Riding Hood. In their "Little Red Cap" in Children's and Household Tales (1812), the girl, paying no attention to her mother's instruction not to stray from the path, responds to the advances of the wolf and loiters on the way. As a result, like Perrault's Little Red Riding Hood, the Grimms' Little Red Cap falls prey to the wolf; however, she is saved by a hunter symbolic of paternity (male governance). Although the Grimms' Little Red Cap is still a victim of rape, in their version, the addition of her mother's instruction and the appearance of the hunter adroitly change the tale's moral and place more emphasis on a patriarchal sense of values. While Perrault's girl is helplessly naïve, gullible and defenseless, the Grimms added the sin of disobedience to their girl. When she is instructed by her mother, she duly promises to obey her; nevertheless, she does not keep her word. The Grimms' Little Red Cap is reduced to an inferior being who can neither understand nor obey social codes or moral precepts. In this way, the girl in the original folktale who is tactful and quick-witted was first made by Perrault to appear naïve and defenseless, and changed into a victim of rape. Then she was reduced by the Grimms to an inferior being who lacks any moral sense. Therefore, the fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood" successfully helped to disseminate a patriarchal sense of values which claims that women must be protected and guided by men. Now, let us examine how Angela Carter transformed this traditional image of Little Red Riding Hood in her fairy tale.
3.3 Little Red Riding Hood in "The Company of Wolves"

The girl being "little" is particularly emphasized by Perrault and the Grimms; whereas, in "The Company of Wolves", the girl "has just started her woman's bleeding" (p. 113). Although the girl in the Grimms is warned not to stray from the path, the girls in both Perrault and the Grimms are not warned about what men are like at all. Neither girl has experienced any sexual awakening yet. In this respect, Little Red Riding Hood in the fairy tale is innocent and ignorant. In contrast, Carter's Little Red Riding Hood has already had her first period and is fully conscious of her femininity and sexual desires. When asked for a kiss by a young hunter, as she understands the meaning, she blushes. She dawdles on her way to her grandmother's house to make sure he will get there before her, as she desires to kiss him.

It is true that the text intentionally emphasizes her virginity, but the girl in Carter, who is not in the least ignorant, seems to know how to make her femininity interrelate with the hunter's masculinity. She does not look upon masculinity as some wolfish brutality or the so-called beast in man. When the hunter who has changed into a werewolf threatens to eat her, she bursts out laughing. Except for when she confronts him inside her grandmother's house, whenever the werewolf is depicted from the girl's viewpoint, he is no less than "a very handsome young one" (p. 114) to whom she promises to give a kiss. It is her grandmother who finds the beast in this young hunter. To her, he is nothing but a wolf, and his true nature is represented by his huge genitals.

Unlike the girl in Perrault who has to do as she is told, the girl in Carter voluntarily undresses herself. Only because she asks him what to do with her clothes, does the werewolf advise her to throw them into the fire. She herself approaches the werewolf, kisses him and undresses him. She tames the beast in him, and comes to terms with his masculinity. She successfully gains control over both their sexual desires. When he lays his head on her lap and lets her pick out the lice from his pelt, it is as if he were a pet cat. Without being devoured, the girl in the end sleeps soundly between the paws of the werewolf. In Perrault, femininity (virginity) is to be destroyed (devoured or killed) by masculinity, and in the Grimms, femininity is to be controlled or managed by patriarchy; on the other hand, in Carter, femininity and masculinity learn to coexist in peace. Carter changes the girl from a mere victim of rape to a self-assertive being who grows up to be an adult through the crucial confrontation with masculinity.

Carter's retelling demands a drastic revision of the stereotypes of women which traditional versions of "Little Red Riding Hood" have justified. By making her girl judge for herself and take action by herself, Carter returned her to the archetypal Little Red Riding Hood who had existed in the oral folktale before Perrault made any typological change to the tale. In addition, by implying that female sexuality is not always passive, Carter cast doubts on the nineteenth-century ideal image of women as sexless, frigid and lifeless beings, a stereotype which had enabled the Grimms to rewrite Perrault, and she brought women back to life.

3.4 The Problem in Carter's Retelling of "Little Red Riding Hood"

On the other hand, when this daring retelling of Carter's is viewed in light of the role of English literature in perpetuating the "male myths of rape", its heavy responsibility in perpetuating these same myths cannot be overlooked. It is true that in her fairy tale, Carter made her girl grow up to be a woman who can judge for herself and take action by herself; in other words, Carter transformed Little Red Riding Hood from a traditionally stereotyped woman who never does anything on her own initiative to a new woman who grapples with a problem
in an active manner. But a troublesome trap awaits Carter in her radical attempt to subvert the fairy tale. In an attempt to subvert "Little Red Riding Hood", which is a fable about rape, any author, whether he or she likes it or not, cannot avoid involvement in the controversy concerning the "male myths of rape". These myths insist that the victim is at fault because she asks for it, while rapists are only willing to make use of this in justification of their criminal acts.

Perrault's girl is so defenseless that she tells the wolf her destination only to find herself the victim of the wolf / masculinity / rape. In order to protest against such a passive figure of womanhood, Carter allows her girl to be conscious of her own femininity and sexual desires and to explore ways of living together with male sexuality, thereby helping Little Red Riding Hood out of her stereotype as the victim of rape. By so doing, however, Carter puts herself in an awkward position where she is open to the criticism that she has transformed Little Red Riding Hood from a passive being who *is seduced* to an active being who *seduces*, in other words, from a virgin who is so ignorant and innocent that she needs to be protected by men, to a "femme fatale" who tempts men into sexual intercourse. In "The Company of Wolves", the werewolf lets his eyes shine, slavers with his desires and utters some menacing words, but he stands motionless, as if at a loss to know how to express his urges. In striking contrast, Little Red Riding Hood takes the initiative sexually by voluntarily undressing herself, giving a kiss to the werewolf and undressing him. Too obviously, the role of the seducer is changed from the wolf to Little Red Riding Hood, that is, from the man to the woman. It is possible, therefore, to read "The Company of Wolves" as a work wherein women tempt men with female sexuality and, to borrow the title of Brownmiller's book, awaken male sexuality "against their will". Consequently, Carter has greatly helped to justify the "male myths of rape" by suggesting that even in an act of rape, men can be helpless victims of temptation. She has ended up strengthening the negative image of womanhood, which is firmly supported by Western Christian civilization which entertains the idea that all women are Eve the temptress and the primary cause of the original sin.

**Conclusion: A Suggestion to the Writers**

Both the previous essay "Rape and Its Representation: 'Male Myths of Rape' and English Literature, Part One" and the present essay "Rape and Its Representation: 'Male Myths of Rape' and English Literature, Part Two" have explored how English literature has contributed to the formation and development of the "male myths of rape" which Susan Brownmiller vehemently censures in her book, *Against Our Will*. When the rape of Lucretia, which was recorded in *The History of Rome* as the symbol of a power struggle between two men, was rewritten by Shakespeare, the cause of the rape was attributed to female sexuality and the rapist was allowed to shift the blame onto the victim. Next, when Richardson depicted the rape of Clarissa, he helped to further the "male myths of rape" by making the victim a semi-conscious temptress who invited her own rape. Then, when Hardy represented rape as relations between the sexes wherein the woman might have consented to the male's advances and was therefore disqualified from being called a victim, the "male myths of rape" gathered momentum. Lastly, in her version of "Little Red Riding Hood", Carter made the woman the temptress and the man the victim, and the "male myths of rape" therefore seemed thoroughly justified.

However, when we know that Shakespeare, for example, might have wanted to please his patron to whom he
presented his work, and that the sufferings of Hardy's tortured heroine might have mirrored the author's own psychological sufferings brought about by the strict censorship imposed on his work, we ought not to jump to the conclusion that these authors must have published their respective works with the aim of contributing to the "male myths of rape". Therefore, it is beside the point to insist that writers should not depict any incident of rape in their works. Nonetheless, now that literature is part of popular culture, I would like to suggest here as a conclusion that any author of a literary work depicting an incident of rape should be aware that, whether they like it or not, they will be involving themselves in the controversy over the "male myths of rape", and should pay the closest attention so that they do not send the wrong cultural messages to the mass of readers unawares.

Notes

1. See Sakata, "Rape and Its Representation: 'Male Myths of Rape' and English Literature, Part One". As for Brownmiller's "male myths of rape", see its Introduction.

2. I have already discussed the relation between the "male myths of rape" and Tess of the d'Urbervilles elsewhere. See Sakata, "Tess of the d'Urbervilles and 'Male Myths of Rape'" ("Tess of the d'Urbervilles to Reipushinwa") in The Full Picture of Thomas Hardy (Thomas Hardy no Zenbou), which will be published by the Thomas Hardy Society of Japan in October, 2007.

3. From this point forward, whenever this essay quotes from Tess of the d'Urbervilles, the page of the Penguin English Library Edition in 1978, which is based on the Wessex Edition in 1912, will be shown in parentheses; however, as there exist some textual variants, when the need arises, quotations will be from the Penguin Classics Edition in 1998, which is based on the three-volume first version in 1891.

4. See Penny Boumelha, for instance.

5. From this point forward, whenever this essay quotes from Clarissa, the letter number of this epistolary novel will be shown as L225.

6. According to K. D. M. Snell (p. 377), the development of the railway in Dorset was after 1857.


8. For a detailed discussion on the retelling of "Little Red Riding Hood" by Angela Carter, see Sakata, "Little Red Riding Hood's Seduction: The Strengths and Weaknesses of Angela Carter's Retelling of 'Little Red Riding Hood'".

9. As for the oral folktale called "The Story of Grandmother", see Dundes, pp. 13-20; Zipes, pp. 18-25; and Orenstein, Chapter III.

Works Cited


