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Translating Stanadayini as Breast-Giver: on Female Symbolization and the Conspiracy of Women

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Abstract: Postcolonial feminism opines Western white women rigidly promote and impose their notion and the methods of fighting for gender liberation on women from Third world neglecting their own different nationalisms and different contexts, which has become a new cultural tyranny and left the women from Third World in the state of collective aphasia. What's more, the oppression given to women by various social forms has gradually been transformed into women's own subconscious recognition, which constitutes a huge conspiracy with the patriarchy. Based on the translation of "Stanadayini" in English and Chinese edition, the paper combines the fate symbolized of Chinese women in different periods and the labour division in social and family life of Indian women and demonstrates that women has become the venue of various struggles at a time of political struggle and national fate so as to point out the new approaches and new thinking for women emancipation of Chinese and Indian women.

Keywords: Postcolonial feminism; the translation of Stanadayini; Women's conspiracy; Symbolization

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1. Introduction

Both English translator Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Chinese translator Wang Kai translated the Bengali word "Stanadayini" as "Breast-Giver"[1]（乳房给予者）[2] rather than "Wet Nurse"[1]（乳娘）[2], readers are able to see the grammatical tension between "breast" and "giving"—the bodily organ is transformed into an action rather than a nominal identity. This choice is itself a theoretical act—"Breast-Giver" preserves the word-formation logic of the original, in which "breast" is directly verbalized and functionalized. The act of translation itself performs the first operation of symbolization, classifying women's body as a known social function.

The paper will have a discussion on symbolized women in China and India based on the translation of Stanadayini both in English and Chinese edition. The development of feminism has been dominated by Western white women, who have been playing a leading role in promoting women's liberation. It can't

be denied that Western white women have lit the navigation lights for Third World women in dark with desperation and pointed out the direction for them. Audre Lorde deems that "Western feminism is failing to make positive change for third world women by using the same tools used by the patriarchy to oppress women. Lorde found that western feminist literature denied differences between women and discouraged embracing them. The differences between women, Lorde asserts, should be used as strengths to create a community in which women use their different strengths to support each other"[3]. As more and more women from the third world, as well as colonial women and black women participate in the women's liberation movement, Western white women still rigidly promote and impose their notion and the methods of fighting for gender liberation on women from the third world, which has become a new cultural tyranny. Traditional Western feminism has showed its autocracy during the process of the women liberation. Audre Lorde believes that the biggest mistake in feminist criticism is "Ignoring the differences of race between women and the implications of those differences presents the most serious threat to the mobilization of women's joint power"[4]. The neglect poses "the most serious threat to the mobilization of women's common power"[4]. The research of postcolonial feminism puts women's destiny in the perspective of nations. Each nation has its own national characteristics. Similarly, when women from different nations choose their way and methods in the process of liberation, factors such as its nationality should also be taken into consideration. And the conspiracy resulting from female subconscious recognition seriously hinders the process of women emancipation.

2. Literature review

At present, the most representative of feminist research in China is Post-colonial Cultural Criticism Theory written by Luo Gang and Liu Xiangyu. Although Chinese feminist expert Li Yinhe has The Rise of Women's Rights, it only describes a small amount of black feminist criticism[5]. In Chinese journals, the discussion of feminism also mainly focuses on the analysis of specific texts. There are only fictional texts in women used for analysis and research, such as The Joy Luck Club and The Woman Warrior. Chinese American Feminist Works. And most feminist studies only view Eastern women from the perspective of Westerners, and most of them focus on the black women situation and their way out of oppression. However, the so-called feminism with the theme of female liberation of women in the Arab world or women in China and India, discussed by Westerners, falls in a state of collective aphasia.

Postcolonial feminist studies began with the study on the black women in the 1970s. They used literary works to expose and denounce a series of unfair treatments encountered by black women. Among them, Barbara Smith's Towards Black Feminist Criticism became a theoretical sign of thinking about black feminism. Black feminism first raised questions about white mainstream feminism, they realized that western white feminism mainly proposed methods and ways suitable for women's struggle based on white women's national characteristics[6]. Therefore, the mainstream feminism has some disadvantages and inadaptability in view of black women in different cultures and situations. They have carried out cultural studies suitable for themselves in accordance with the cultural characteristics and current conditions of their country, which has attributed to post-colonial feminism, and a large number of related papers have emerged. Representatives include GC Spivak and Mohandy. Among them, Mohandy's work has greatly promoted the study of postcolonial feminism. There are a lot of detailed information from Third World in Mohandy's Third World

Women and Feminist Politics. The description of the combination of women and national movements plays a guiding role in the study of postcolonial feminism. The essay focuses on Third World women's personal experience and criticizes the first-world white women's single definition of Third World women[7]. Although the post-colonial feminist research in the West has been in full swing, it is still lacking in the integrity of the research.

3. Chinese women symbolized and their conspiracy

3.1. Chinese women and foot-binding

Although there are different opinions on the origin of Chinese women's foot binding, there is no doubt about the fact that the practice foot binding has a great relationship with patriarchalism.

Foot binding was universally welcomed in ancient times, and men were even more obsessed with three-inch Jinlian (ancient name for women feet). For women in ancient China, the size of their feet was directly related to their fate and marriage which was decisive to their happiness in their lives, and ironically, the person helping young girls binding foot was not someone else, but their mothers. The mother, as a woman, personally carried out the tortured binding, from which we can see that women themselves recognize, inherit, participate and conspire in the cruel behaviour against themselves. Simone de Beauvoir "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" [8].Women have grown up in such a cultural tradition which is a kind of oppression against women's injustice generation after generation, and has gradually become a collective subconscious. Women's subconscious recognition of the foot-binding has formed a conspiracy that has caused foot-binding in China for thousands of years. From the initial passive acceptance to the subsequent positive implement, which fully demonstrates that the very first step of women's liberation is to awake women from collective unconsciousness and step out of conspiracy against gender discrimination.

However, the ban of foot binding is far more complicated than the implement of foot binding. First of all, it is proposed that the male leaders banned foot-binding, for women had little right to control their own fate. Most importantly, the background of foot-binding ban occurred when the national destiny was in a threat. In the late Qing Dynasty, the Qing government saw the gap between China and the West in respect of industrial development. They believed that they should first imitate advanced Western countries and prohibit Chinese women from foot binding to liberate women with the purpose of catching up with the West. Under such political circumstances, the "No Foot-binding" campaign was carried out vigorously. Later, Mr. Sun Yat-sen and others stepped up the intensity of the prohibition of foot-binding, and the complete ban on female foot-binding by Chairman Mao Zedong. The whole process of foot binding has a close relationship with the change of government, or with the power struggle.

The act of women's foot-binding has become a place and a symbol for political struggle in the country. Women's removal of the foot wraps is seen by the new political forces as a symbol of victory or defeat against the old political forces and becomes a symbol as the consequence of national politics and an influence by national destiny, every individual in the national background is subject to the constraints and influences of various power factors. It is also the same for feminism. In the process of liberating women, we must consider not only gender-based discrimination, but also multiple factors such as political struggle, democracy, internationalism, especially, the women's conspiracy against themselves.

3.2. Chinese women in China Family Planning Policy

China family planning policy was originally proposed based on the low productivity and the large population which severely hindered economic development of China. In order to develop the economy rapidly, the family planning policy, proposed in the 1970s, does have positive significance under the background of the times. However, from the perspective of women themselves, the government carries out women's fertility management for and restricts their freedom, and the ligation measures are adopted on women's bodies which are hurt badly. Under such historical conditions, the body of Chinese women and the national economy and national destiny are inextricably linked. Similarly, with the development of society and economy, the development of China in this century has been seriously affected by aging, and the body of Chinese women has once again become a tool for the country to alleviate the crisis of the silver-haired society. Chinese women under the family planning policy whose uterus have become a tool for the country to regulate the economy. The body of Chinese women has become a symbol of the country's economic development. The freedom of childbearing is controlled by the authority. Chinese women are faced not only with resistance to men's power, but also need to consider the pressure and manipulation from the country and the nation. In view of the context in which Chinese women live, which is unique and completely different from the woman from the West, also from the women from other Third World, the paths for the liberation of Chinese women should be looked for under the special condition.

4. Indian women symbolized and their conspiracy

In India, a democratic country, the tragic situation of Indian women mainly origins more from the patriarchal cultural tradition formed over the millennium than from the state system. It's not difficult to come to a conclusion that many behaviors will come to an end immediately with the abolition of the system, such as Chinese women's foot-binding and evolution of China's population policy, but collective unconsciousness and some notions from traditional culture with a long history are like blood flowing in the body of each generation and have a deep root in each generation's mind which is extremely difficult to shake its foundation.

4.1. Indian women in the social division of labour

An important reason for the low employment rate of Indian women lies in the inherent norms and constraints imposed on women's social roles. The actual situation can be showing vividly in front of us without official figures applied, everyone who has been to India is surprised by the lack of women in all the malls, banks, every small shop, and even roadside stalls. Where have most women gone? The answer is that most women stay at home. Is it because women's education does not meet the needs of the labour market? Obviously not. This special social phenomenon is mainly influenced by the patriarchal notion. In India, many well educated women also stay at home due to the Indian traditional culture characterized by patriarchal notion holding that married women going out to work are a disgrace to the husband's reputation and a manifestation of the husband's incompetence. Affected by the traditional thinking, many women who even have obtained a master's degree or even a doctoral degree have to return to the family as housewives. A small number of married women is still working, usually with the consent of their husbands, by which we can see that Indian women have little choice in terms of social labour division. Under the patriarchal power, women gradually lose their economic independence, lose themselves, and gradually lose their ability to

liberate themselves. It is even more tragic that women themselves gradually take this state of life and choices for granted, and unknowingly participate in the unfair labour division that is dominated by patriarchalism. Such conspiracy has deprived women of more opportunities and rights to struggle for freedom, fairness and emancipation for themselves. The withdrawal of women from participating in the labor division of society and returning to the family is undoubtedly the symbol of men's hegemony.

4.2. Indian women in family division of labour

Indian women, bound by traditional culture and compelled back into family life, center their lives on their husbands and children. They are diligent in housework taking good care of the family. "There is no such thing as a woman who doesn't work. There is only a woman who isn't paid for her work.[9]" But do they get respect from their family for their devotion? The answer is definitely not. Women's labour and dedication in family life have not been appropriately respected and rewarded. Family members regard women's dedication as a responsibility and due obligation. The reason is rooted in the disrespect of Indian men to women. "Men have still not realized that letting women do so much of the work for so little reward makes a man in the house an expensive luxury rather than a necessity.[10]" Men take women's dedication for granted, and discriminate against women's family roles. Perhaps some women enjoy this division of labour, but their recognition and conspiracy restricts and deprives more thoughtful women of their right to make their own choices. The essence of this phenomenon is still the influence of patriarchalism. Women's recognition of this phenomenon is once again involved in the conspiracy of oppression against women themselves. Such conspiracy exists in every corner of the world.

5. Exploring the liberation road for women in China and India

In the process of exploring the proper liberation path for the women from China and India, first of all, it is necessary to awake women's consciousness and to urge women to step out of the conspiracy.

Secondly, when fighting against various doctrines, the most powerful weapon is knowledge, textbooks and pens. More than 200 years ago, US President Thomas Jefferson proposed that only an educated nation can maintain its vitality. If women want to obtain true liberation and freedom, they must have a free soul which origins from women's judgment and knowledge. The development of things has its internal and external causes, and the internal cause plays a decisive role. Therefore, women from the third world, including Chinese women and Indian women, need to receive better education to form their own understanding of their situation, of the world, of the collective unconsciousness and of the conspiracy, ultimately to protect themselves and defend women's rights.

Thirdly, try to apply the guidance of post-colonial feminist theory to find women liberation by combining each country's cultural characteristics and nationalism. After an in-depth discussion Spivak said in his article that the people at the bottom of society could not have their own voice. Speaking itself is a symbol of freedom and rights, women need to have their own voice in the process of emancipating ourselves, women need to step out of the aphasia state under western feminist hegemony, and let the world hear the needs of Third World women[11].

6. Conclusion

All human liberation movements will not be sailing smoothly, and so will women's liberation movements. Post-colonial feminism is aware of some misunderstandings of traditional western feminism, and promptly puts forward the pluralism of feminist struggles. It also recognizes the differences in the national and cultural context of women from different worlds, and theoretically guides the world's liberation movement of women. However, in the process of practice, it is necessary to continuously improve and respect differences. What we need to do is to listen to women's voices and wishes in different contexts, and finally find the most suitable methods and ways to liberate women in different cultures, and gradually liberate women from various forms of oppression.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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