

Analysis on Bodily Writing in China

Lin Ling

College of Science and Technology, China Three Gorges University, Yichang, Hubei, 443000, China

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Abstract: In China, bodily narrative has been employed and by many authoresses like Chen Ran and Lin Bai since 1990s. Their female consciousness is the historical response of the western feminism and female literature. Neither the theoretical construction of feminine literature criticism nor the bodily writing itself is perfect. In this paper, the related theory of bodily writing was put out, and the brief route of development in this field is clearly given. Thinking of the improvement of the feminism and negative factors in bodily writing style in China, it is required to take a wise attitude towards the relationship between man and woman.

1. Introduction

“Bodily writing” has become a hot topic in literature in China since 1990s. People tend to focus on the private experience of such “Beauty Writers” who would like share the sex experience with the audience.

Muzimei, a 25-year-old sex columnist, has continuously posted details of her sexual stories and one-night-stand experiences on her blog, named “ashe of love”. When she is not working, she frequently visits bars at night to meet guys and changes her sexual partners every week, according to her sexual confessions. It is said that she has had sex with more than one hundred men. She disclosed real names of those men. One of these “lucky dogs” is Wang Lei, a rather well-known rock star.

Muzimei is a new woman in the media circle, and also a columnist for City Pictorial.

She became accustomed to one-night-stands because she had been dumped by her first man who made her pregnant. Finally Muzimei failed to graduate as a philosophy major from Zhongshan University just because of the unhappy love affairs with that man.

She was quitted by City Pictorial a few days ago. I think she exposed her sexual life for fame and revenging herself on the community by which she could relieve her extreme painful feelings.

Far from at random, love-making should be based on true love, although whatever else can be done about sex fantasy.

2. Related Theory of Female Writing and Bodily Writing

There are many differences between male and female writing. The male writing usually has better cultural tradition than female, and men’s thoughts and ideas are always considered to be the mainstream of the society. However, female writing has to choose a rather narrow way to express women’s ideas and necessity. They have to write something about the realistic bodily feeling and experience; what they own is only “bodily feeling”.

Cixous, the most famous feminist from France, put out a renewed concept of female writing named “bodily writing” in last century. In her theory of feminism writing, the bodily writing is from women and facing to women. It just indicates the feminine experience and potential consciousness which relate to the physical feeling. (Cixous, 1986) i.e. it is a way of expressing female’s thoughts through materializing her ideas, and in order to tell others what she is thinking through bodily feeling. Cixous thought that females have a specific world which belongs to them only, and this world is just based on the experience of the physical functions. This world is thought as the perfect beauty, guaranteed by the pondering of eroticism of females themselves, and is filled with the fantastic agitation, desire, enthusiasm and sensitive impulsion.

It is said that females should not fear of males' prejudice, but should describe the body daringly, using their pen to manifest the beauty experience belonging to females, i.e. to describe the real selfhood. Besides, they should let the audience hear their sound of bodily. Only in that way, will the springhead of the potential consciousness spew out. In that condition, bodily writing can establish the relationship between the text and the physical joviality, and help the females to return the original world which only involves with the soma feelings. And if so, the females may find a way to get out of the harassment of prejudice and man-dominant values.

3. The Essence of Bodily Writing

When the writing of bodily feeling became a trend around the whole world, shall we need to ponder over the reason for this phenomenon? And shall we anatomize the deep essence through the sea's surface? We may see from the following perspectives:

3.1 The Production of the Feminism

It is considered that the object of feminism is to help the females seek their liberation and freedom in the man-dominant society. The feminists encourage females to try many ways to get the rights in life.

Female writing is the behavior to try to win females' speech rights in history and culture through describing the female utterances (Chen Ran, 1994). It is also a hidden process of the females' self-construction. The appearance of female writing has not only broken the dumbness of the quiet women, but also pulled the feminine experience out of the dark. This type of writing is a behavior to overthrow and clear up the males' privilege in writing. And in this non-gunpowder war, women are trying to scramble the rights in utterance, in writing, and in leading role in literature field. Just as the feminist Cixous said, "Women must join writing, must write themselves, and must write women..... Women must put themselves into the written text, just like embed themselves into the world and history through the struggle." (Cixous, 1984)

3.2 The Production of the Commercial Operation

After reading the comments on bodily writing by some of the famous critics in literature, we can easily find that, as a unique literature incident, bodily writing has become the co-action of the media, the writers, and the audience together. It goes with the pursuit of economic interest from the beginning to the end. It is a market-dominant economy in China, whatever. Too many people are dreaming to become famous or in one night, and earn a large number of money without along the common way.

3.2.1 The Audience Need Excitements

In the modern times, people in china get to know more and more new things both of China and the foreign countries, many of the young people, the so-called "in" people are running after the western fashions, from the basic lifestyle to the way of thinking. When read more and more regular Chinese literature works, they want to try something new in reading material. Especially to the people who have much time to kill, it is urgent for them to get something to stimulate their brain mind by reading. Therefore, the topic within more or less sex color became their top choice. They would like to spend much time on internet just to wait for the columnists' writing about men and women, and they were willing to pay high price for those books and magazines.

3.2.2 The Media Need Economic Interests

The media can push the development of a country's cultural economy, and can change a nation's reading habit (Dai Jinhua, 1996). With the popularity of "Muzimei", "Wei Hui" and another "Beauty writers", the media obtained great profit from this kind of writing. Surely, it is not wise to negate the value of the bodily writing, but the question is, why the bodily writing attracted more attentions comparing with the other types of writing? Just because of the hot propaganda by those low-grade internet editors, bookmen and print institutions. They encouraged the young and pretty

women writers to write the realistic experience and feeling about sexual activities, under the name of liberation of sex and pursuit of females' disillusion of self-consciousness. In their mind, the print and publication of this topic will must get considerable economic profit.

3.2.3 The Writers Need High Income and Fame

In the new century with intense competition, it is hard for one to become rich and well-known in a short time. More and more people are thinking to choose an easy way to be known by the masses. How to be famous in one night became a main question in many people's lives. Thanks to the spread of the computer and internet! If you are "unique" enough to let all the people focus on your works, you are sure successful. Muzimei, Zhuying Qingtong, Mianmian, and many other writers, they have had the blogs on the internet, which affected a large quantities of people's heart.

In the process of show their bodily or sexual life with the audience in text or on the internet, they attained high return as the form of money. They became famous and rich, which helped them achieve a better material condition.

4. The Contemporary Situation in China

4.1 Four Phases of the "Bodily Writers"

With the appearance of the first book about feminism in China in 1980s, it had four phases in the development of the so-called "bodily-writing" in China (Sun Changjun, 2004).

The first female writer who got involvement with bodily writing is Wang Anyi. In her 1980s' works like the Trilogy of Love with the mountain, the small town, and the Jinxiu Valley, she described the real experience of women's life, and showed us the feeling of life's flowing.

Up to 1990s, the feminism theory of the western countries was brought into China, which speeded up the appearance of the formal bodily writing. Chen Ran and Lin Bai were on behalf of the first generation of "Bodily writers". In their works, we could see the vivid description of women's private affairs.

Then, as the representatives of the second generation of bodily writers, Wei Hui and Mianmian turned up. Their novels were quite popular in the form of electronic version on the internet, for internet got the fast speed of spreading around the world. And there being more attention to people's original desire in their novels, which added up the color of consumption, and latter, aroused large numbers of controversial critiques in the society.

The third generation was Muzimei, Zhuying Qingtong, Chunshu, etc. There were not only large quantity of sexual description in their works, but also added up with photos. This form of bold presentations gave a big shock to the audience, and with more and more critiques.

4.2 The Way from the Positive Enterprise to the Negative Degeneration

When we think about the literature value of the bodily writing, it is difficult to find a credible proof. Should they give out so much details of sexual feeling in the text in the name of seeking women's rights of culture?

It is obvious that the bodily writing in the nearest time has almost lost the positive enterprise in struggling with the man-dominant society; instead, too much "low-level" content went into their books, which made the positive influence of bodily writing has been changing into another pole.

In many critics' eyes, the nearest generation of bodily writing has gone to a way of "yellow sheet". Their works are called "sex apparatus writing", "the whorish writing" or "the writing of the half-length below". The writers wrote their books only at the aim of attracting attention and earning money of fame, but without any positive social cares at all. It will be a disappointing depression to the specific writing field. As a matter of fact, when too much description of women's bodily feeling appeared in the texts, the bodily writers neglected their social figure to the teenagers' growing.

5. The Termination of the Bodily Writing

After the four phases of development, we can easily find some disadvantages of the bodily

writing. Will this form of writing in female literature have a bright future? It is sure that the overreach of feminine consciousness is not a great phenomenon; we need a balance with men in the real life, whatever. The overmuch description and showing of women's body may apparently influence the attitude towards marriage and love of the young girls. They may become pessimistic to the social interrelationship between man and woman, and they may hardly believe in their love partners. Therefore, we should be clear about our objects in the feminism activities.

The confrontation between the two genders is not our final termination. The establishment of the harmonious relationship between man and woman is just the end-point. In the bodily writing, they should avoid denigrating man's figure, after all, there are still many great men around us in the living. The bodily writers should be aware of this goal, and try to take their works out of the "low-level" layer.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, the related theory of bodily writing was put out, and the brief route of development in this field is clearly given. Thinking of the improvement of the feminism and negative factors in bodily writing style in China, we should take a wise attitude towards the relationship between man and woman. The world needs balance, including the harmony of human beings with the nature, and the peaceful relations of the two genders. Therefore, the future of the bodily writing will not be as pessimistic as the critics predicted, instead, it may have a new era in this circle if they ponder over the original motivation carefully.

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