

Discourse construction of ecofeminist literary criticism

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ABSTRACT

As the intersection of ecocriticism and feminist criticism, ecofeminist literary criticism discusses the expression form and significance of the dual oppression of nature and women in history, culture and society. This mode of criticism not only injects new theoretical vitality into contemporary literary research, but also builds a liberating and sustainable discourse system. By analyzing the images of nature and women in literary works and deconstructing the dual domination of patriarchy and capitalism, ecological feminist literary criticism attempts to provide theoretical support for the reconstruction of ecological ethics and gender ethics. At the same time, it calls for attention to ecological and gender issues in different cultural and social contexts, and explores the diversity and universality of ecofeminist critical discourse in the context of globalization. This paper aims to explore the discourse construction process of ecological female literary criticism from four aspects: theoretical origin, core concept, critical method and application in specific literary texts.

KEYWORDS

Ecocriticism; Feminist criticism; Ecognostic literary criticism; Dual oppression; Nature and women

1 Introduction

With the increasingly severe global ecological crisis, the academic community began to reflect on the anthropocentric world view and the ecological consequences brought by industrial civilization. Overexploitation of natural resources, environmental pollution and climate change not only threaten the survival of human beings, but also trigger a profound reflection on the traditional development model. In this context, ecocriticism, as an interdisciplinary field of study, has emerged rapidly, emphasizing the exploration of ecological consciousness and the relationship between human and nature in literary works.

At the same time, feminist theory grew in strength in the mid-20th century, offering a powerful critique of patriarchal societies by revealing gender inequality and its deep structural causes. Feminism not only pays attention to the social status and rights of women, but also gradually extends to many fields such as culture and ecology, forming a theoretical branch that integrates with ecocriticism - ecofeminism. Ecofeminism holds that nature and women are oppressed together in patriarchal and capitalist systems, and this dual oppression is widely reflected in literature.

As the core branch of this cross-cutting field, ecofeminist literary criticism explores the symbolic relationship between nature and women, and reveals the joint shaping of ecosystem and gender structure by anthropocentrism and androcentrism. It attempts to deconstruct gender and ecological metaphors in traditional literature through a critical reading approach and explore possible alternative narrative modes. At the same time, the critical method also attempts to answer the following questions: How does literature express the commonality of nature and women? To what extent can ecological ethics and gender ethics be unified through literary creation and critical practice?

Therefore, ecological female literary criticism is not only a theoretical perspective, but also a methodology and practical strategy. It provides a new enlightenment for re-understanding the social function of literature, and shows important practical significance in the context of global ecological and social transformation. Under this background, this paper will discuss the discourse construction of ecological female literary criticism from four aspects: theoretical origin, core concept, critical method and concrete text analysis.

2 The theoretical origin of ecofeminist literary criticism

The theoretical origins of ecofeminist literary criticism can be traced back to the academic traditions of ecofeminism and feminism, and its development is also deeply influenced by multidisciplinary theories. This theoretical origin is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

Ecocriticism, as a critical theory concerned with the relationship between human beings and nature, provides a solid foundation for ecofeminist literary criticism. Its core goal is to reveal the embodiment of anthropocentrism in literature and culture, and to advocate the reconstruction of ecological ethics. Critics of ecology such as Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm emphasize that literature is not only an expression of human emotions, but also reflects the complexity of human interaction with nature, which provides a critical framework for ecofeminism.

The basic position of feminism is to deconstruct gender oppression and reveal the embodiment of gender power

structures in culture and society. Ecofeminism absorbs the ethical perspective of feminism and emphasizes the intersections of gender and ecological issues. In particular, Simone de Beauvoir's critique of "otherization" in *The Second Sex* provides a theoretical basis for understanding the dual marginalization of women and nature.

Francoise d'Eaubonne was the first scholar to put forward the concept of "ecofeminists". She pointed out in the 1970s that ecological destruction was intrinsically linked to gender oppression, and that patriarchy not only controlled women's bodies, but also controlled women's bodies. It also reinforces gender and ecological inequalities through the looting of natural resources. De Bonn's point of view becomes the ideological starting point of ecological female literary criticism.

Ecofeminist literary criticism is also influenced by the disciplines of cultural ecology, social ecology and postcolonial theory. For example, Murray Bookchin's socio-ecological theory explores the social structural roots of ecological problems, while postcolonial theory reveals the complex representations of ecological and gender issues in colonial contexts. By integrating these theories, ecofeminist literary criticism can form a more diversified analytical perspective.

The "ecofeminist logic" proposed by Karen Warren, a guide to ecological ethics, attempts to establish an ethical framework based on relationality and symbiosis. Her theory emphasizes that the value of nature and women should not be instrumentalized, but should be recognized on an ethical level. This kind of thinking provides an analytical tool for ecofeminist literary criticism to explore the ethical relations in literature.

3 The core concept and methodology of ecological female literary criticism

3.1 The analogy between nature and women

In literature, nature is often personified as a "mother" figure, or women are associated with natural images such as land and rivers. This analogy reinforces the dual subordination of women and nature to a certain extent.

3.2 Deconstruct patriarchal narrative

Patriarchal narratives usually construct power structures through the possession and control of nature and women. Ecological female literary criticism aims at revealing these narrative strategies and rerepresenting the subjectivity of women and nature through literature.

3.3 Double marginalization and compound oppression

The marginalization of women and nature stems from the dual structure of patriarchy and capitalism. In literary works, this compound oppression is expressed through metaphor and symbol, forming an adversarial discourse space.

3.4 The methodology is divided into text close reading, historical context analysis and interdisciplinary method

This paper analyzes the ecological image and gender metaphor in literary works and reveals how the author expresses the ecofeminists thoughts through literary means. Examine the historical background of the creation of the work, and analyze its relationship with the ecological crisis and gender issues at that time. Combining the multi-disciplinary methods of ecology, feminism and cultural studies, this paper explores the ecofeminism significance of the text from multiple dimensions.

4 Discourse construction of ecological female literary criticism

4.1 Application of literary works

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*: In this work, the infringement of science and technology on nature symbolizes the control of patriarchy over women's bodies; *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte: Through the natural landscape to show the character's emotions and social oppression entanglement, metaphor of women and the common fate of nature; Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* connects female fertility with the struggle for ecological resources and criticizes the oppression of patriarchy. *The Poisoned Wood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver shows the role of women as victims of colonialism and ecological destruction, and calls for ecological justice.

4.2 Discourse construction strategies

From the edge to the center: the establishment of subjectivity, ecological female literary criticism attempts to place

marginalized women and nature in the center of literary analysis, giving it subjectivity. Reconstructing ecological ethics and gender ethics, constructing ecological ethics and gender ethics with cooperation and symbiosis as the core through literary criticism, challenging the traditional binary opposition logic. To promote the diversification of critical discourse, ecological female literary criticism pays attention to the diversity of critical perspectives, absorbs different cultural backgrounds and disciplinary methods, and enriches its theoretical connotation.

5 Conclusion

As an interdisciplinary field of theory and critical practice, ecofeminist literary criticism not only connects ecofeminist and feminist theory, but also brings new enlightenment to literary research in practice. By analyzing the dual images of nature and women in literary works, ecofeminist literary criticism reveals the interweaving of anthropocentrism and androcentrism, and their impact on ecosystems and gender relations.

The significance of this theory is not only that it provides a new perspective of literary interpretation, but also that it inspires deep thinking about how to realize the integration of ecological ethics and gender ethics. In the context of global ecological crisis, ecological female literary criticism provides a more comprehensive and diversified perspective for human society, and emphasizes the importance of rebuilding the harmonious relationship between man, nature and gender in culture and literature.

In the future, with the acceleration of globalization and the further complexity of ecological issues, ecofeminist literary criticism is expected to play its role in a wider cultural context. It not only provides a profound cultural reflection on the ecological crisis, but also provides a theoretical basis for realizing the sustainable development of society. Through the continuous deepening of the analysis of literary texts and the improvement of critical methods, ecofeminists literary criticism will occupy a more important position in literary research and social practice, and provide lasting impetus for the integration of ecological and gender issues.

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