

## A Critique of (Pseudo) Feminist Criticism of Post-1980s China\*

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The feminist movement in current China has always been attracting controversial arguments, especially in contemporary women's writing and cultural criticism. The re-awakening of feminist consciousness took place in the 1980s and produced many good writers and critics dedicated to the course of women's enlightenment. However, after the International women's Conference in 1990s, the feminist movement took a theoretical and radical turn under the influence of Western feminist theories and their deconstructivist discourses. The dislocated confrontations between the Chinese female consciousness and the Western post-modern culture, along with the abusive application of Western gender study theories, make most of Chinese critics difficult to adopt a tolerant attitude toward Chinese experience, and tend to be hegemonic towards critics emphasizing reason and rationality. Its cultural politics ignored multiple forms of gender experience, and the conflicts between academic and political. This paper re-evaluates the development of Chinese feminist criticism of post-1980s China. And it proposes the Chinese feminist criticism should first and foremost be based on local experience of Chinese women, and then explores gender problems for Chinese readers.

*Keywords:* Feminist writing, radical criticism, gender discourse, Chinese experience, theoretical transformation

The female consciousness and feminist ideas re-awaken in Chinese literature and art only during the early 1980s. With the opening up and reformation policies, the Western theories of feminism has been introduced into mainland china, only to motivate the growth of Chinese feminist writing and accelerate the (over)maturity of Chinese feminist criticism. After the development of almost 30 years, feminism has been fully established in current China, already as one of the key words in contemporary Chinese literary and cultural studies. In the arena of feminist criticism and gender studies, there has been emerging not only key female critics such as Zhu Hong, Dai Jinghua, Huang Lin, Ai Xiaoming, Ren Yiming, Li Xiaojiang and etc., but also well-known male scholars, such as Wang Fengzhen, Wang Ning, Meng Fanhua, Ye Shuxian, Lin Shuming and etc., who join the former camp to promote the feminist studies in both textual and social worlds. However, Chinese feminist studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been growing more and more theoretical and radical, claiming not only to deconstruct the masculinism in textual worlds, but also challenge and subvert the patriarchal society in the real life. Within a framework of postmodern culture and deconstructivist discourse, there is obviously a totalistic tendency towards the actual difference between two genders and a hegemonic attitude to feminist criticism and gender studies. This paper re-examines these problems in a historical review of the development

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of (pseudo)feminist criticism, re-evaluates related issues in feminist writing and criticism, and re-explores implications of Western feminist theories to Chinese gender experience. And with the argument, the author's belief is re-asserted that only feminist criticism with rationality help to understand the Chinese women's experience in a reasonable way, and in this case only feminist theories with enlightenment facilitate Chinese gender studies in an academic manner.

### **The Re-awakening of Chinese Feminism**

The re-awakening of Chinese feminist movement starts from the early 1990s. During Chairman Mao Zedong's era, the ideas of women's power and gender equality are pervasive, and such slogans as "women can shoulder the half of the sky" are popular. Besides, the liberation of Chinese women is institutionalized in almost every aspect of the social life. However, the related policies focus too much on the conception of equality, and more or less erase the realities of gender difference, and repress the growth of female self and feminist ideas. The emergence of Chinese female consciousness originates from the enlightenment movement in the early 1980s, and hence not as a product of Western feminist theories. According to Prof. Ren Yiming's studies, "the first feminist work during the very period, which is also the most original and the most voluntary one, is the fiction *Fang Zhou* by the Chinese writer Fang Jie, while Zhang Weian in his criticism of Chinese women writers, emphasizes the rising female perspective of Zhang Jie and other women writers (Ren, Yiming, 2005, pp. 57-61). With their female experience, these female writers take literature both as the vehicle to present their reflections on their identity as modern Chinese women, and as a means to enlighten and educate their readers, both male and female.

As a whole, their writings represent the waking of Chinese women literature and the rising of Chinese feminism movement, not only recognizing their self-identification as women, but also asserting their cultural identity as Chinese. Taking advantage of the social transformation, they also realize the untranscendable difference in both a biological and psychological term, present the feminine and masculine images in a contrastive way, and even start to identify such stereotypes as "big man" vs. "small women". Whether they are female writers or critics, or even as artists, we can find, in our reading of their works, a natural wakening of female subjectivity and a recovery of female selfhood. Since the 1990s, the introduction of Western feminist theories has been changing the track of Chinese feminist movement itself, and under the former's influence the later also takes another methodological turn to theoretical studies and discourse analysis. The equality between the two genders is the common pursuit of Sino-Western feminists, but there exists a huge social gap between their understandings of gender difference. As a result, encounters between the two forms of feminists in current Chinese context can only reduce the social realities into a theoretical space, and lead to an ideological war between the two genders in a textual or discursive world.

Ever since the mass importation of Western feminist theories, the development of Chinese feminism has submitted itself to the latter's theoretical resources, critical discourses, and most importantly, concepts. Under such circumstances, the Chinese feminist criticism takes a great step forward directly from modern or realistic approaches to post-industrial or post-modern culture. It is not surprising to hear Chinese scholars making such complains that the Chinese literary criticism only takes 20 years to leap ahead the past century of Western theories. But, the development at such a speed causes problems and the most serious symptom is the simplistic or reductionistic approaches towards the women's actual experiences, and a radical attitude towards the difference and the complicatedness of gender issues. In terms of the conception of gender, the feminist criticism

usually emphasizes the constructedness of gender, and adopts deconstructive approach in the studies of gender experiences. In this sense, Simone de Beauvoir's classic sentence has been always cited, "one is not born a woman, but becomes one" (*On ne naît pas femme, on le devient*). It implies that one is also not born a man, but becomes one. To Beauvoir, the stereotypes of man and woman are not natural as an existing form, but cultural as a social product, or more specifically, the ideological products of patriarchal society. Unfortunately, she is too radical to realize the essentialism in the conceptions of gender, let alone the anti-essentialist approaches in feminist criticism and gender studies. In such a framework proposed by de Beauvoir, the male can only be the opposite or the enemy of the women, and in this essentialized way, the feminist criticism, to most feminist theorists, can only mean a war between the two genders, and to fight against the existing norms or rules, and deconstruct everything in the male world, along with the related masculinist ideologies and discourses pre-established in such a patriarchal culture.

In the anti-essentialist framework of Western feminist theories, Chinese feminist criticism shifts the critical focuses from the local women's experience to the theoretical space of gender, and in this way aims at deconstructing the feminist writers' subjectivity and subverting the ideological structure of masculinity and patriarchy. Thus, the practices of deconstructionist are popular in the field of feminist criticism, subverting traditional images and subjects of both male and female. But, the subversion or deconstruction of gender stereotypes does not lead to the birth of any new forms of gender identity, let alone any new understanding of gender identification. Quite on the opposite, the feminist criticism has been immersed in the theoretical labyrinth of deconstructionism. To most Chinese feminist critics, they are more accustomed to the binary-oppositional strategies of critique of masculinity and patriarchy. When being asked about the exceptional cases in the group of male Chinese, they do not answer the question in a direct way, but take every male Chinese in a complicit relationship with the patriarchal society. In their arguments and critiques, the male Chinese as whole has been configured as the opposite side of Chinese women, and the former has always been the silent other in the imagined gender wars of those feminist critics. In the theoretical space, the real experience of either male or female Chinese is not the key point here, while what is most important are the critical strategies of deconstructing masculinist hegemony. The binary opposition between the two genders, along with the critical games of deconstructionism, gender difference has already become an efficient vehicle of cultural politics, while the idea of equality in real experience neglected in the ideological space.

### **The Deconstructive Fallacies of Chinese Feminism**

With the application of Western feminist theories in a simplistic way, the Chinese feminist criticism has achieved a great transformation of both theoretical framework and research methodology. Turning from the construction of Chinese women's experience in the 1980s and embracing the deconstruction of Chinese male's masculinism, the early maturity of Chinese feminist criticism can only lead to a reductionist interpretation of feminism itself, along with a radical critique of male culture. In this way, the opposition of "strong male vs. weak female" has been essentialized and some feminist critics have already been used to cover themselves under the name of "other" which has been made weak and voiceless, only to equip themselves with a critical sympathy and attack the male culture in the name of victims. The gender difference is the target of their feminist criticism, while at the same is also the platform of their academic activities. Voluntary or not, most Chinese feminist critics, out of a requirement of professionalization, have been using gender difference as an effective weapon of cultural politics, and always presupposes a binary opposition between the two genders only

to start the theoretical game of deconstructionism again and again. In other words, whether Chinese men are masculine or not, whether Chinese women are feminine or not, the real gender experience is not important. What is most important is the critique of masculinist patriarchy for a topic, a dissertation, a monograph, a Ph.D. or even a professorship. Theoretical speaking, the deconstruction of gender stereotypes does not in a natural way result in a construction of positive gender images in a reverse way. To them, the "image critique" sounds perhaps more radical and more fashionable than traditional practices of feminist movements (Zhang, Jingyuan, 1992, p. 199). In such a conceptual framework of gender deconstruction, the real experiences and the actual differences are not important, let alone the explorations or solutions of gender problems. What is vital here in this game of gender critique is to insist on the critique of the male hegemony and profit in the persistence of the feminist radicalness.

There is no denying that the serious critiques of masculinism and patriarchy facilitate the reflection of male subjectivity and the improvement of female consciousness, especially in consideration of the oppressions and discrimination endured universally by women in social practices as a whole. However, it is simplistic or even naïve to mistake the critique of male dominance as the ultimate goal in feminist criticism. It should not stop at the deconstruction of traditional stereotypes of both genders, while on the opposite the feminist criticism can only take the critique of masculinist power as an indispensable tool to better understand women's experience and better reconstruct female subjectivities. In this respect, the feminist criticism should pay special attention to its methodological problems, and guard itself against such fallacies in deconstructing male objects and overlooking female subjects, let alone falling into the trap of essentializing gender conceptions and succumbing to the trick of deconstructionistic oppositions.

The critique of patriarchy may be an effective method to awaken Chinese women and deconstruct the male subjects, while the healthy criticism is the only way to liberate women and educate men. Without the construction of female subjectivities, the feminist criticism virtually amounts to nothing but hatred and condemnations towards the male along with the complaints and gossips from the female. The feminist criticism should and have to point out the correct direction for the transformation of female writing and the reconstruction of female subjectivity. To a great extent, Chinese feminist writing covers not only the Chinese women writers and their writing of the female experience and gender identification but also the Chinese male writers and their neutral narrations of gender differences along with the sympathetic descriptions of female stories. However, as the feminist camp ever growing larger and larger, the internal membership becomes more and more multiple and complicated. Within the particular group, the conflicts and arguments between different members are inevitable, while some feminists are getting more and more radical and political. Ever since the birth of Chinese feminist criticism, the male and their writings have always been the only target of ideological critique. There seems to be no exception of any kind that male writers can also write about Chinese women and their experience in a politically-correct way, as there is also no possibility for real communications or sympathetic understanding between the two genders. Even there is such an exception or possibility, feminist criticism would like to deny them in order to keep such binary oppositions not only for political correctness in real societies, but also for profitable topics in academic world.

Elaine Showalter once distinguished mainly two modes of feminist criticism in her important work *Toward a Feminist Poetics*. One is to always take women as dependants of male, and emphasizes the study of female images in literary texts, along with the critique of male dominance and power relations between the two genders. The other is to take women as producers of literary meanings, and focuses on the construction of

female writing and feminist criticism, along with an analysis of the cultural contexts and ideological discourses. In the early Chinese feminist writings, women and their experiences has always been the subject of feminist criticism, but with the introduction of Western feminist theories and especially their radical ideas, there has been a clear transformation in both an ontological and methodological way.

Under the strong impacts from the works of Western radical feminists, such as *The Second Sex* of Simone de Beauvoir and *Sexual Politics* of Kate Millett and etc., Chinese feminist criticism has a radical turn towards deconstructionism strategies, and hence embraced the postmodern discourse of male critique and gender politics. Although the above-mentioned two prominent figures have been serious criticized for their radical ideas in Western academia, there is not simply not enough reflection in current Chinese feminist criticism. Generally speaking, the male as a whole group has always been universally criticized for their hegemony and patriarchy, only as the de-voiced other in this kind of academic plays or inter-plays of gender deconstruction. Ironically, while there are some male critics who are sympathetic towards Chinese women and their experience and even participate in the feminist movements, they have always been excluded as the alien outsiders of feminist camp and the controversial topics in feminist criticism. In fact, they are in a rather awkward position either to accept the politics of gender deconstruction or to be rejected outside of feminist criticism. But if they accept the ideas of radical feminism, they always find themselves still as the voluntary targets within the binary opposition of gender politics. Paradoxically enough, the feminists want to deconstruct the binary oppositions between to genders, but have to first remain a complicit relationship with this kind of gender politics. The play and interplay in the deconstruction of gender lead back to essentialized conceptions of gender and politicized oppositions of feminist criticism.

Even in the Chinese feminist camp itself, there are also disruptions and conflicts between feminist writers and feminist critics. As to the contemporary Chinese female writers, more of them do not appreciate the title of feminist writers, and would like to be women writers instead. This is quite interesting when we consider their intentions and behaviors which are not quite feminist. For example, the well-known Chinese women writer Zhang Kangkang made a speech “We need two worlds” at the International Workshop of Berlin in 1985, and stated that the female writing should have concerns about at least two world: one is female lives, problems, and perspectives, and the other is the more profound space of social lives (Quoted from Li, Xiaojiang, 2002, p. 199). Based on the conception of women’s two worlds, Zhang encourages her fellow writers to transcend the stereotypical modes of gender politics and to write about the “big world” shared equally by both men and women. In her own ideas, either the women’s world or the social lives are just parts of the common world, and this world cannot be complete without either men or women. That is to say, in the real world, the antagonistic feminist writing is not realistic as an effective solution to gender problems, let alone the female writing in a radical framework of binary oppositions. Unfortunately, Zhang’s conception of “the two worlds” is not appreciated but controversial at that time, and the focus of the arguments is the right re/positions or the trans/formation of feminist writing itself.

### **The Oppositional Framework of Chinese Feminism**

The feminist critics argue that female writing should have to draw a clear dividing line with male writers, and keep a necessary distance with the male discourses and ideologies. In this case, female writing are required to be clear in position, and stubborn in attitude, and only through this way can a literature of their own be created and persisted. However, the feminist criticism can only be based on the writings of female writers and

experience of female subjects. Those feminist critics can ignore the sympathetic discourses of male writers to represent the female experience, but they can never exclude the female writers from the camp of Chinese feminist criticism. Once there was no female writing, there will be no feminist criticism at all. The feminist criticism relies on the writing of female writers to such a great extent that feminist critics, when they are not satisfied with the female writers, intervene directly into the latter's literary activities and even comments straightly on their personal lives. However, on the other side of female writers, they simply can not accept the over-interpretation or even misreading of their own works in a too politicized way. In this case, Zhang, Kangkang, who appreciates the writing of female selfhood during 1990s, argues against the Chinese feminist critics' way of negating the female writing and deconstructing the female subjectivity, claiming "I don't agree with those feminist critics because they seems to believe in a rigid manner that you are guilty to be a female writer if you don't follow their ways for criticism and don't not write in the way they prescribed for you" (Li, Xiaojiang, 2002, p. 169). Besides Zhang, Bi Shuming, another important female writer echoes the voices from Chinese female writers and also points out the rigidity and conflicts of Contemporary Chinese feminist criticism. She insists that "if to be a female writer means that you cannot write about the development of human kind, the vital challenges in both philosophy and reflection, I think this is to deprive female writers of the rights to speak about and address these kind of important problems" (Li, Xiaojiang, 2002, p.169).

Being challenged by such uncompromising words from Zhang Kangkang and her kind of female writers, some Chinese feminist critics also fight back and condemn the former as the degraded members in the group of Chinese women and the hopeless victims of patriarchal society. Some radical feminist argues, "Living under the Chinese patriarchal culture for so long, the male society hold prejudices, discriminations and hostilities against our feminists, but ironically some female fellows also have no understandings of feminism in mind and no courage of feminist in heart. Even such pioneering and feminist writers and critics as Zhang Jie, Zhang Kangkang, Wang Anyi, Li Ziyun, Cui Weiping and etc., often avoid the labeling of feminist literature, and in a paradoxical way deny their own identity of feminist writers" (Jing, Wenye, 2000, pp. 64-92). In fact, female writers to be criticized in the above-mentioned list are all serious writers in mainstream culture, and hence have a large population of readership both male and female.

To explore the particular reasons why they are popular best-sellers, is not among the timetable of the feminist critics, and the latter seems to have no time to listen to the defense of those female writers, study the symptoms of their female subjectivities, and understand the production of their female experience. On the opposite, feminist criticism is more interested to discipline female writers and their writing in a feminist way they prescribed, and to guard against any deviated attempts with their weapons of deconstructive criticism and gender politics. Their practices of feminist criticism are extremely simplistic in binary oppositions, either patriarchal writing or feminist writing and there is nothing in between. In this way, these Chinese feminist critics usually take a presumed role of the weak other in both literature and society, and stick to a stereotypical way of feminist writing agenda. But those female writers, rich in both literary and social experiences, instinctively understand the real problems of Chinese women, and intuitively distance themselves with Western theories of feminism. It is these female writers who better present the contemporary Chinese women and their experience, only through a literature of their own, not only with a reflection of social problems but also with a production of literary values.

Unfortunately, contemporary feminist critics have not given much consideration to the conservative voices of Zhang, Kangkang and her kind of female writers, and instead they gradually turn to focus in a fanatic way

more on a group of so called “Beauty Writeress” and “Body Writers” emerging in the late 1990s. Among them, Wei, Hui, Mian Mian and etc., although nowadays gradually disappeared from the literary arena, take the lead in constructing a new trend of radical feminism in China. As a while, this group of female writers takes advantage of their body as resources for literary writing, and advocates in a deliberate way the detailed description of body passions and sensual images, let alone the sexual experience in an almost pornographic way. The literary meaning and moral value of their so called body writing attracts no comments, but the objects of their writing, especially the sexual figures and their deviated lifestyles are highly appreciated by some Chinese feminists. It is interesting to find that the experience of body writing (or more appropriately, sexual writing) is even fully acknowledged by certain feminist critics in articles like “Different Expression: Gender Perspective and Individual Position”, as “the fourth stage (the mass media age)” in the short history of contemporary Chinese feminist movement (Huang, Lin, 2002, p. 190). This way of historicizing feminism in fact leads mainstream female writers such as Zhang, Kangkang off the stage and brings Wei, Hui and other radical female writers to the foreground. Such issues of profitable creation and sexual orientations of these kind of radical female writers are not worthy of discussion, but their literary works are definitely not good enough be coined as pioneering or avant-garde, let alone the literary skills and techniques. What is most attractive and most misleading has always been their naked description of sex and sensuality. The categorization and periodization of feminist writing in such a way, has neglected both the deep meanings and social duties of female writing, while on the opposite it foregrounds academic profits along with the identity politics of feminist ideologies.

### **Body Writing and the Radical Chinese Feminism**

For Chinese feminist criticism, body writing is not only a literary phenomenon of Chinese women’s experience, but more of a way of cultural identification in Chinese gender politics. It is to find that some feminist critics and radical female writers have been always in a complicity of knowledge, power and profit. For feminist critics, the body writing represents the power of popular culture, which is irresistible allurements for both commercial profit and academic success. On the other side, radical female writers take advantage of the academic feminist criticism and bring the commercial cultures into the field of knowledge production. The internal conflicts and arguments in the camp of Chinese feminists, to a large extent, reflect the different values along with multicultural developments. Radical feminist critics have been repressing the growing of multiplicity and in this regard may represent a totalitarian style in gender politics and a hegemonic tendency in identity exclusion. As a result, contemporary feminist criticism refuses to examine the possibilities of male writers’ pro-feminist works, and focuses only on the male critique and female body writing by ignoring the ontological identity of female writing. The deconstructive criticism of female writing may not facilitate the construction of female consciousness in a healthy way, but only reduces the female subjectivity to the level of body and sex, and leads to the profit-oriented writings of female body and sensual passions. In other words, there may be some kind of co-operations between radical feminist writers and critics, as they have been supporting each other working together to foreground the female bodies, promote the sensual descriptions and propagandize the gender politics mainly within a deconstructive framework of binary oppositions.

Reviewing the short history of Chinese feminist criticism, there is a clear cut between traditional (or mainstream) Chinese feminist and Western style (radical) Chinese feminist. Under the influence of Western radical feminism, the Chinese feminist criticism has a great transformation in both gender theories and social practices. As to literary criticism, the Chinese female writers in the early 1980s has been insisting on writing

about the women's experiences and constructing women's subjectivities, while since the early 1990s the feminist critics accept the radical feminist theories and turn to deconstruct the conceptions of women itself and consolidate the dichotomy of gender politics. In the methodological transformations, the postmodern culture pervades in the current Chinese feminist criticism while the latter has gradually transformed into partisan politics, academic mendacity or even profitable business for both writers and critics alike. In the prescribed norms of binary oppositions, Chinese feminist writing and criticism follows the track of gender politics while the real situations of Chinese women and their problems are simply not their concerns. They may be happy with the achievements in the textual worlds, but turn a blind eye to the cries and weeps of Chinese fellow women in real lives. In the textual world, they have won the war against the male objects, but in the real world they have already lost the hope for the female subjects.

Although the radical feminist criticism applies the analytical framework of deconstructionism, but feminist critics never accept the fact that even deconstructionists themselves try to expose the unknown structures and explore the possibilities. In terms of knowledge production, deconstructionism proposes two fronts for feminist criticism; one is to subvert the masculinism and patriarchy of male society, while the other is to reflect the femininity and maternity of female experience. Unfortunately, radical Chinese feminist critics never realize the huge gap between the critique of male and the liberation of female, and have equalized two approaches without any differentiation. They take an easy way for gender wars, but ignore another for women's liberation. With the establishment of disciplines and courses in women studies, feminist criticism has been more and more institutionalized and in this way more and more mechanic, textual and theoretical, intervening into today's social practices in the name of women's liberation. For those radical Chinese feminist critics, the Western feminist theories and gender discourse are to a large extent everything in their interrogation of Chinese gender practices, while the local experiences of Chinese women are nothing but footnotes to their appropriation of fashionable Western theories. However, in their critical passions along with textual strategies, feminist critics fail to realize a simple fact that Western theories grow out of the soil and well-nourished by Western cultures.

The appropriation of Western theories cannot ignore the local ecological environment, and there may be conflicts or even confrontations between the two cultures. It is a pity to find Chinese radical feminist criticism simply relies on Western theories of both feminism and deconstructionism and applies them to reinterpret the local women's experience in a simplistic yet coercive way. The result of such misapplication may produce some ridiculous misreading or misinterpretation of Chinese realities, but never invites any serious counter-criticism under the cover of academic studies of gender in a comparative way. Under the pervasive power of Western theories, Chinese feminists either participate in theoretical games of gender deconstruction, or simply turn away from the traditional field of women's studies, even as most of them have a clear understanding of the real mission of Chinese women's liberation and enlightenment movement. After all, to be radical usually means fashionable and to be fashionable always means profitable.

### **Conclusion: Towards a Poetics of Chinese Feminism**

Considering the prejudices and oppressions Chinese women have been suffered for the past centuries, the deconstructive approach of feminist criticism does help to re-evaluate cultural traditions and moral values deep in Chinese history and culture, with an aim both to enlighten contemporary Chinese women and educate the Chinese male subjects as both writers and readers. Chinese feminist critics over-state the critique of patriarchal society while underestimate their own power to transform women's selfhood and reconstruct female

subjectivities. On the one hand, they need first of all to respect the individuality in self-identifications, and also the differences between genders and the multiplicity of Chinese women in terms of body, age, family, race, ethnicity and most importantly class. On the other hand, they are expected to return to the real world of gender experiences, adopting a sociological approach in the study of gender problems in China and carrying out researches of Chinese women and for Chinese women. The future development of Chinese feminist criticism are required to re-evaluate the past history of feminist movements and especially the deconstructionist methodologies based on ideological critique and gender politics. In this way, it should handle in an appropriate way conflicts and confrontations between problems and representation, reality and discourse, academia and ideologies, and other dichotomies of theories and practices. To solve the potential crisis in feminist criticism, it should avoid such a framework of binary oppositions in gender studies, and turn to study the social realities of Chinese women, applying the Western theories of feminism only as a starting point for reference and presenting the Chinese perspectives of gender culture as the main mission for practices.

To realize the target of Chinese women's self-representation, feminist criticism should first of all transform the Western discourses of gender studies into the local Chinese context and then work mainly on the reconstruction of Chinese female subjectivities, through reevaluating both the male traditions and re-interpreting female innovations. It is safe to say that Chinese feminist criticism, although nowadays no longer a popular topic among the academic circle, should always be important in our Chinese culture for its historical contribution in enlightening the female subjects and educating the male. But it can resume its past popularity and reassert the future significance, only when it draws back from a deconstructive framework of feminist politics of male critique to a constructive mode of women's studies of public gender experience. In its future development, Chinese feminist criticism, if there is still such a thing, should re-orient itself from ideological criticism to cultural poetics of Chinese women's writing and never get away from the analytical framework of both Chineseness and Femaleness. And in this case Chinese feminist critics should, before educate their female subjects, re-educate themselves in the everyday experience of Chinese women.

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