

Gender Equality in New Public Management Movement Practice Based on the Perspective from Feminism of Virginia Woolf

Xiaofeng Ma

College of Humanities and Law, Beijing University of Chemical and Technology, Beijing 100029, China

Abstract: *Feminism is a common word for a complicated phenomenon, which deals with women's standard, searches for the equality between men and women, and strives for eliminating the barriers preventing the liberation and development of the women. In the development of woman literature, there are many outstanding women writer and Virginia Woolf is a quite representative one. Her works had been studied by the authoritative scholars and enriched the feminist thoughts. And her work A Room of One's Own is considered to be a feminist declaration, which also has its deep realistic influence. Her thoughts, the inequality between women and men cause women request equal status with men who lead to more and more feminist movement began. So until 20th century, the New Public Management Movement did people pay more attention to women's rights and the feminist movement out broke.*

Keywords: *Feminism, New Public Management, Virginia Woolf*

As to feminist theory, it aims to understand the gender inequality and focuses on gender politics and power relations. They tried to find the social and political relationships between women and men then call for women's rights. There are many themes in feminist theory which include discrimination, stereotyping, objectification, oppression and patriarchy and so on. There is a basic premise in all feminism theories that women were in a position where they were oppressed and discriminated.

The history of the modern western feminist movements is divided into three "waves". Each wave dealt with different aspects of the same feminist issues. The first wave comprised women's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, promoting women's right to vote. The second wave was associated with the ideas and actions of the women's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s. The second wave campaigned for legal and social equality for women. The third wave is a continuation of, and a reaction to, the perceived failures of second-wave feminism, beginning in the 1990s [1].

However, in my point of view, Virginia Woolf's feminist thought doesn't focus on the sexual discrimination but the reconstruction of feminine consciousness. Therefore, we need to dig out her feminist thought, and find its new meaning in nowadays.

In New Public Management, public managers are urged to "steer, not row." They steer by determining objectives, or *what* should be done, and by catalyzing service delivery, or *how* it should be done (rowing), through their choice of a particular "tool" or combination of tools (e.g., markets, regulation, taxes, subsidies, insurance, etc.) for achieving the objectives [2]. Markets and competition—often among actors from different sectors—are the preferred way of delivering government services in the most efficient and effective way to recipients seen as "customers," not citizens. Public managers should be empowered and freed from constrictions so that they can be "entrepreneurial" and "manage for results." In practice, of course, managers often face the worst of circumstances in which they are accountable for results but not allowed to manage for results [3].

A Room of One's Own is Virginia Woolf's representative feminist work, which includes her major feminist thoughts concerning women and fiction: having their own way of writing, having their own voice. From the perspective of feminist literature, *A Room of One's Own* not only explicates the feminist thought and writing theory, but analyzes and answers a series of problems that concerned with women, such as why women must write fictions, why women are poorer than men, how important of house and money to women, why men insult and humiliate women, what the influence of giving birth to women, why the feminist literature lack of a tradition, what the conditions for women to write. Virginia Woolf uses "I" to give suggestions to women that women should fight for equal rights with men, give few births to children, get a room of their own, use an androgynous to write literature and construct their female

identity[4].

The road of women's writing is full of thorns and rough, and women could start to write is the results from each generation of literature women's struggle. Because the female writing is not only a literature phenomenon, this phenomenon is also reflected in the women's social status and economic status. It is no exaggeration to say that the prosperity of female writing directly reflects the social status of women. The development of female literature in England is the best witness.

Virginia Woolf has always been deeply concerned with the fate of women and their life. When she delivered her speech in Newnham College and Girton College she told that women should have their own rights and they should fight for their rights. It had included the following contents:

1. Material Space

In the eighteenth century, more women began to write. However, their writing condition was very bad which can't be called a room. Virginia Woolf thinks that all she could do was to offer them an opinion upon one minor point—a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to writing.

However, some may question that what the relationship between “a room of her own” and women writing is. A woman cannot write without a house? What's the meaning of a room? Every readers of Virginia Woolf would be puzzled by these questions when reading this book and they really want to work it out.

First of all, women writers faced the most basic difficulty is they have no available space for the writing, also not a house of their own. Virginia Woolf believes that in the male dominated Vitoria Dynasty, although women broke into the male dominated place by writing, and regarded writing as their love and career. Compared with men, their creation condition is very bad. They do not have their own private space of writing for their imagination fly free. They were restricted in the living room, busy in household chores, and their creative ideas would be interrupted from time to time. Virginia Woolf says that: "But for women, I thought, looking at the empty shelves, these difficulties were infinitely more formidable. In the first place, to have a room of her own, let alone a quiet room or a sound, proof room, was out of the question, unless her parents were exceptionally rich or very noble, even up to the beginning of the nineteenth century." And from this, Virginia Woolf believes that the most basic material conditions of female writing is writing environment and writing space. Jane Austen was an example. She didn't have a study when she was writing. So she could only write in her living room and always interrupted by others. Her most writing is done behind the public living room corner. When someone enters the living room, she would have her writing quietly hid, so as not to be laughed at; sometimes have to stop writing to do housework, so writing is often interference. Therefore, a room of her own would provide a woman with the time and the space to engage in uninterrupted writing time.

For another, women should need the basic financial insurance. Whether women can smoothly writing without writing space? Virginia Woolf believed, writing conditions are established on the basis of the material. Female writing not only need a house of her own, but also must have a certain amount of money as a writing protection, at least \$500 annual income. It depends on the time and a small amount of money, and the chance to observe the world given by money and leisure. That is to say, the lack of money is not benefit for women's writing; it will lead to women's lack of knowledge and reading of the plain. No money, women cannot enter the school learning or buy books to widen their knowledge; No money, women will not be like men to leave home or country, enjoy the exotic places, to cultivate one, increase personal experience [5].

2. Spiritual Space

Compared with the social stratus and social economic conditions of female writers, Virginia Woolf not only focuses on female writers which limited to the material conditions, but also the impact of patriarchal ideology to them, especially the influence to their creative process.[6]

First of all, an important influence of the patriarchal ideology is the lack of complete system belonging to the women's literary tradition. Virginia Woolf believes that women's literature has its tradition, and this tradition has been a female writer's nourishment place. But because of the attitude from patriarchal, it is often forced to be interrupted, which makes this tradition itself not apparent in the mainstream literature, and only a few of the famous writer is recorded in the annals of history. But the traditional is interrupted and is not obvious. The difficulties of women writing have increased objectively, and this is

a vicious spiral facing by women in literary creation.

According to the "angel in the house", all about "human relationships, ethics and the meaning of sex" cannot be talked freely and openly by a woman. The standard of moral value in accordance with the male by shaping the image of "angel" has not her own desires and thoughts. It has great influence on female writers. "She interrupted me, and wasted my time". It is not easy for women to overcome the sense of value which has been gradually internalized from the male values. Because it has been firmly occupied their life, the fields of thought and culture. And it has a great impact on their spirit.

Therefore, Virginia Woolf advocated that women writers should exclude the interference from outsiders, continue to struggle with the "angels in the house". Virginia Woolf said that no matter when, as long as the feeling of "angel" wings of the shadow or into the writer's paper, the writer must strain every nerve to kill her. But she will not die so easily. "To kill a ghost is more difficult than killing a life. When I was thought that she has been killed by me, she always quietly slipped back". But in any case, killing "the angel in the house" is an important part of a female writer work.

In the depths of the female writers creative thinking, imagination is often suddenly hit something hard. This is the male standard of moral value. Because when women writers want to express some things, which are not always told by the women about the body, and about sex, men will feel surprised. Men can have a free in this aspect, but it will not allow to a woman to do so, even imagine it also cannot be forgiven. This confusion seriously interfere with the creation of female writers: "she can't write anymore. The state of trance disappeared. Her imagination doesn't work. I believe that this is a kind of experience which is very common in women writers. They are contained by a kind of extreme gender conventions". Therefore, Virginia Woolf believes that to get rid of the "angel in the house" and struggle with the confusion in the creative imagination, is every woman writer's responsibility. And this struggle is more difficult and more durable than struggle with the environment. Although Virginia Woolf boasted that she has killing the "angel in the house", but she did not achieve complete victory in the struggle. Look from the surface, the writing is easy to be women's occupation, and from the deep, female writers still struggle with many ghosts, and there are still many prejudices to overcome.

3. Having Their Own Rights

Virginia Woolf tells from the reality of her being blocked in Oxbridge University, thinking of the status of women. And then think about the status of women in history. In the book *A Room of One's Own*, the heroine has two times of the experience of being expelled in Oxbridge University: one on the lawn, the other is in front of the library. Because of they are not allowed women to enter. Through these two examples, they illustrate the status of women in institutions of higher education profoundly.

Literary works are always men occupy the position of the heroine and women only in the subordinate position. There is also prejudice and discrimination of literature critics of female writer's works, and these works are often excluded from the mainstream literature. The patriarchal ideas have great influence on the knowledge of women at the top of the field of culture and education; it will be isolated from the culture of female authority and mainstream, so that women become the social and cultural outsiders.

In the suppression of the male supremacy over a long period of time, women gradually lost the right to speak. Therefore, this is why Virginia Woolf calls for women to have their own voice. In this case, women want to engage in literary creation is very difficult, but this outsider status makes them a unique perspective and space, and paved the way for the development of their literary. Virginia Woolf believes that, as long as women can take up the pen in hand to write, they may enter the history with a different provision in the patriarchal culture, and make a difference in culture. Therefore, she calls for twentieth century women that "I would like to ask you to write all sorts of books, no matter how small the topic is. Don't hesitate. When I ask you to write a book, I encourage you to do good things for you, and good things for the world.

In order to explain the unique way of female writers express their voice, Virginia Woolf listed a number of writers, such as Jane Austen: in nineteenth century, the Bronte sisters, George Elliot, Mrs. Browning, and so on. By comparing their works, Virginia Woolf proposed that women should use their own language in the creation of their literature works. She pointed out that it is different from the creativity of women and men. So we can draw a conclusion that if this ability is hidden or waste will be regret; if women write like men, or living like men, or look like men, it will be a great pity. If the whole world with numerous and complex change unpredictably, both sexes is not worth mentioning, so how can we live with one of them? And compared with the common thing, education should be used to

encourage and nurture those different characteristics. Female literature should express the different performance, with the female as a link, boldly use the female language, and reflects the women's world view and value view, open up a new world except from the traditional literature.

In *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf uses the first narrator "I". She refers herself "I". In this book, the use of a first person narrator is very special and effective. Firstly, this use of first person narrator could prevent the essays sounding like a sermon. "I" in this book does not refer to Virginia Woolf, but to Mary. "Mary" is a female name, which indicates that "I" is a female. However, "I" is not a specific individual, but refers to different types of women. Then this method could strike a responsive chord in the hearts of the readers. Secondly, the narrative voice has something to do with the topic "women and fiction". In chapter one of the book, Virginia Woolf said that. "Fiction here is likely to contain more truth than fact. Therefore I propose, making use of all the liberties and licences of a novelist, to tell you the story of the two days that preceded my coming".

In Virginia Woolf's day, if a woman wanted to express her opinions, she would face a number of obstacles. But Virginia Woolf could do it through the narrator in the book. Virginia Woolf uses the narrator "I" also as a revolt to the patriarchy of the society where women had almost no opportunity of expressing their own opinions. Virginia Woolf is against the prejudice that women should be silent. In her opinion, she thinks that women should have their own "voice", which should be heard by the men. And women should know clearly their own positions in society. The use of the narrator "I" in *A Room of One's Own* expresses the wish that women want to have the opportunity to express their opinions in order to change the situation that women always mechanically repeat men's words and are silent in that patriarchy of the society.

United Nations proposed The Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) project is a joint initiative of the United Nations Statistics Division and UN Women that seeks to improve the integration of gender issues into the regular production of official statistics for better, evidence-based policies.

EDGE aims to accelerate existing efforts to generate internationally comparable gender indicators on health, education, employment, entrepreneurship and asset ownership in three key ways:

(1) Developing an online interactive platform to disseminate gender-relevant data and metadata on education, employment, and health.

(2) Developing methodological guidelines on measuring asset ownership from a gender perspective that was presented to the UN Statistical Commission in 2017.

(3) Providing technical support to countries to implement the EDGE methodological guidelines.

Feminist social science commonly distinguishes three different approaches to the realization of gender equality which can be summed up under the headings of 'gender equity', 'gender difference' and 'gender plurality'. Approaches focusing on *gender equity* are working with a model of women being equal to men. It is argued that women 'as equals' should be granted the same kind of citizenship as men. Claims are related to the fair treatment of women and men in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. In order to gain independent access to citizenship rights that are primarily linked to labor marked participation, it is important to enable women to compete on equal terms with men. Criticism of the approach points out that this model for gender equality requires women to transform themselves to fit an employment template which has been developed by and in the interest of men.

Approaches focusing on *gender difference* are working with a model of women being different to men. It is argued that notions of social and political citizenship should be redefined to include women as care workers. Claims are related to the positive valuing of gender differences, i.e. an adequate social recognition of 'the female' and 'the feminine'. As far as employment is concerned, priority is given to adapt the preconditions of labor marked participation to reproductive needs and to ensure material security and welfare provisions for persons with caring responsibilities. Criticism of the approach points out that this model for gender equality limits women to so-called women-specific tasks.

Approaches focusing on *gender plurality* are working with a model of women and men as holders of multiple gender identities. It is argued that the dualistic thinking in terms of 'male' and 'female' is inadequate, as it ignores all the differences existing within gender groups. Claims concentrate on the deconstruction of existing dualistic gender norms in order to diminish the relevance of sexual differentiation as a means of classification. As far as employment is concerned, priority is given to the stimulation of 'gender atypical' work and employment relations. Criticism of the approach points out that this model for gender equality undermines the political power of women as a disadvantaged group in society [7].

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