

P239 - "It's a miasma"

Translation and Reception of Women's Centrism

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Abstract: From 1921 to 1922, Li Da (1890-1966) and Xia Ya Zun (1886-1946) successively served as Sakai.

The Japanese translation of Feminism by Toshihiko (1871-1933) was based on the Femalecentrism Theory, which translated the feminist-centric theory proposed by the American sociologist Lester F. Ward (1841-1913) into China.

(1) Soon after the publication of the Chinese translation, the theory had a widespread impact on Chinese intellectual circles and sparked heated debate, in contrast to the cold reception it received in the United States during the same period.

This paper mainly focuses on the discussion of the female-centrism theory in the English original, Japanese translation, Chinese translation and Chinese newspapers and examines the reasons why this theory, which has been abandoned in the United States, was translated into China, the various misunderstandings of people at that time, and the specific combination with local historical and cultural resources.

The research shows that there is basically no rewriting of the content of the book from Ward to Sakai Toshihiko to Xia Yazun and Li Da, but the authors/translators have different

interpretations, evaluations, and assumptions of gender relations in the future due to their different historical contexts, motivations for text production/reproduction, their respective positions and attitudes, and their hopes to serve practical issues.

After entering the realm of receptivity, the doctrine was once again deconstructed and restructured by Chinese readers who held different ideas.

Socialists, feminists, nationalists, and sociologists have appeared, mainly from the perspective of practical, rather than theoretical acceptance, affirm or critique the female centrism theory.

Female centrism has thus, become a battleground for debates of various ideas, theories, and schools.

Key words: Women's Center; Translation; Accept; Misreading

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References:

[1] Female-centrism, also translated as feminism, is a theory put forward by the American sociologist Ward.

Sakai Toshihiko, Li Da, and Xia Yazun's translations all have the title "Female Centrism Theory".

In this article, except for the specific reference of "feministrism" relating to the translation, "female-centrism/centric theory" is instead used in the rest of the text, which refers to the doctrine founded by Ward.

Page 240: **A Chaotic Scene: The Translation and Reception of the Gynæcocratic Theory in China**

By Tang Xinyu

Abstract: The gynæcocratic theory, put forward by Lester F. Ward (1841-1913)

in 1888, was introduced to China via Japan by Li Da (1890-1966) and Xia Mianzun

(1886-1946) between 1921 and 1922. In contrast to its being seldom mentioned in

the United States during the same period, the theory aroused a heated and prolonged discussion among the Chinese

intellectuals. The translators Li Da and Xia Mianzun did not actually agree with Ward's analysis of the causes of inequalities between men and women, although they faithfully translated his theory. Similarly, the readers, including socialists, feminists and nationalists, criticised or approved the theory according to their own values and stances.

Behind all the different opinions, there were something in common: the vast majority of readers adopted a pragmatic position, without paying much attention to the theoretical study of the theory, which not only inevitably caused misreading of Ward and his theory, but created difficulties in recognising the weakness of the theory.

Key words: the gynæcocratic theory; translation; reception; misreading

In 1903, one of the founders of American sociology, Lester F. Ward (1841-1913)(1) published the book "Pure Sociology"(2).

In the course of exploring the research tasks of sociology, the 14th chapter of the book presents the theory of female centrism, which includes the main ideas that in the biological realm, females have always held a dominant position, being the primary sex, while males are subordinate and considered the secondary sex; initially, reproduction and sex were unrelated, and females themselves could ensure the continuation of the species, with the role of males becoming apparent only when it came to facilitating the absorption of heterogeneous elements to improve the quality of the race; females often chose robust and colorful males during mate selection, which led to competition among males and continuous development, although this is still insufficient to replace the advantageous position of females; in early human society, gender relations were still female-centric, with women holding the active choice and bearing the responsibility of caring for and protecting offspring; however, with the development of male rationality and the awakening of paternal consciousness, female centrism was replaced by male centrism, placing women in a position of submission.

References:

[1] Lester F. Ward's Chinese translated names include "沃德", "乌德", "华德", "瓦特", "瓦德" etc. This article cites the original literature using the original names, while "沃德" is used

elsewhere.

[2] The Chinese translated names for the book Pure Sociology include "纯社会学", "纯理社会学", "纯粹社会学", "纯正社会学" etc. This article cites the original literature using the original name, while "纯粹社会学" is used elsewhere.

In the 1920s, in order to establish their own sociological theoretical system, Chinese academics translated a large number of European and American sociological theories, which were introduced, especially American sociological theories.

Amongst the most translated sociologists and their works included C. A. Ellwood (1873-1946) *Sociology and Modern Social Problems*, E. S. Bogardus (1882-1973) *Sociology in Place for the Female Dominance*; In the early days of human society, gender relations were still centered on women, and women held the right to take the initiative and shoulder the responsibility of caring for and protecting future generations.

However, with the development of male rationality and the awakening of fatherhood, female-centrism has changed to male-centrism and women have been in a subordinate position since then.

(1) Unlike the general view of this period that women were inferior to men, Ward, as a paleontologist and sociologist, sought evidence from biological and human evolution, trying to prove that women played a leading role in racial evolution and gender relations from the beginning; Later, when women lost their dominance and became slaves, they blamed male oppression.

This upend of the perception of the time, aimed at studying the history of the status of women, if only conclusively, undoubtedly supported the emerging feminist movement in the United

States at that time.

However, from the day it was proposed, it was constantly criticized by biologists, anthropologists, sociologists (more on this later), and even Ward himself admitted that almost no one accepted his theory.

(2) By the time Sakai Toshihiko translated his doctrine to Japan in 1916, (3) it had long been ignored in the United States.

But that doesn't stop feminism from gaining acceptance in Japan and China.

From 1921 to 1922, Xia Yazun (1886-1946) (4) and Li Da (1890-1966) (5) introduced female-centrism to China, using Sakai Toshihiko's translation as a model.

Chinese intellectuals have been engaged in a long-term heated discussion around this theory.

The focus of this article is:

Why was this doctrine, which was criticized in the United States since the day it was proposed then later discarded, translated into China?

Is it misinterpreted?

And how to integrate with the local history and cultural background?

In the 1920s, the Chinese academic community translated and introduced a large number of Western sociological theories,

especially American sociological theories, in order to establish their own sociological theoretical system.

(6) Among the sociologists and their works that were mainly translated and introduced were C. A. Ellwood's "Sociology and Modern Social Problems", E. S. Bogardus's "Introduction to Sociology", and F. W. Blackmar and J. L. Gillin's "Outlines of Sociology", among others from the second generation of American sociologists.

References:

(1) Lester F. Ward, *Pure Sociology* (New York: Macmillan, 1903), pp. 296-297.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 297.

[3] Lin Toshihiko (commentary) and Ward (authors): "The Theory of the Women's Center" (Tokyo: Herdsmen's Society, 1916).

[4] Lin Liyan (commentary) and Lin Zun (transpiled): "Women's Center Theory", *Women's Review*, a supplement to the *Republic of China Daily*, Nos. 1-24 (August 3, 1921 to January 11, 1922) (Nos. 3 and 7 are missing).

[5] Sakai Toshihiko (commentary) and Li Da (trans.), *The Theory of the Female Center* (Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1922).

[6] For related research, please refer to Yan Shuqin, "The Selection and Integration of American Sociological Theories in the Republic of China Scholars: A Sinicization of Sociology in the Republic of China."

A Lateral Investigation", Zhang Kaiyuan and Yan Changhong

(eds.): *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 10 (March 2013), pp. 107-126; Chen Xinhua: *Students in the United States and Chinese Sociology* (Tianjin: Nankai University Press, 2009).

(1) As one of the pioneers of early sociology in the United States, Ward is not among the key figures of interest, to Chinese sociologists.

According to the information I currently possess, there were few intellectuals discussing Ward's sociological theories at that time, including Yi Junzuo (1899-1972) and Huang Gongjue.

The former believes that Ward's works, "Psychic Factors of Civilization" and "Dynamic Sociology," are among the representative works of the psychological research school and the comprehensive research school in sociology, respectively, and recommends Ward's "Outlines of Sociology" and "Pure Sociology" as one of the main introductory texts for sociology; (2) Huang Gongjue, in 1922, wrote a biography of Ward for the "Journal of Sociology," particularly emphasizing Ward's significant contributions to the development of American sociology.

(3) Aside from this, almost no one else has provided a more detailed introduction to Ward and his sociological theories. His entry into the vision of Chinese intellectuals relied on his discussions on women's issues in his sociological writings and other research articles.

The earliest introduction of Ward's thoughts on gender issues during the May Fourth period was made by Mao Dun (1896-1981). In 1920, at the invitation of Wang Yunzhan, editor of the "Women's Magazine (Shanghai)," he translated a section titled

"Women in History" from Chapter 14 of Ward's "Pure Sociology," which was published in the first issue of that year's "Women's Magazine (Shanghai)."

(4) At that time, the "Women's Magazine (Shanghai)" was impacted by the New Culture Movement and had just announced the abolition of the principle of the virtuous wife and good mother in December 1919, advocating for women's liberation as the direction for reform thereafter.

(5) Mao Dun's translation of "Women in History" was a response to this call. In the text, Mao Dun faithfully translated the account of women's historical oppression by men and the causes of this situation as discussed in Ward's original work, while also providing supplementary explanations based on the actual situation in China.

For example, when the original text discusses how terms like "woman" and "femina" discriminate against and belittle women from the perspective of etymology, Mao Dun reflects: "Even in terms of character creation, the characters of the East and the West can be said to be vastly different; however, in creating the character for 'female,' according to Ward's account, it turns out to have nearly the same meaning."

(6) He uses "女" and "母" as examples to prove that the methods of Chinese character creation and the concepts contained within them "can indeed be said to be barbaric, completely devoid of any respect for motherhood,"

(7) hoping to reveal the tragic plight of Chinese women through Ward's discussions.

As for the women's center, Mao Dun did not mention it.

References:

[1] Yan Shuqin, "The Selection and Integration of American Sociological Theories in the Academic Circles of the Republic of China", pp. 109, 116.

[2] Jun Zuo, "Research Methods in Sociology," *Oriental Magazine*, Vol. 18, No. 21 (November 1921), pp. 76-77.

[3] Huang Gongjue, "The Biography of the Great American Sociologist," *Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (February 1922), pp. 1-2.

[4] Yan Bing [Mao Dun], "Women in History," *Women's Magazine*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (January 1920), pp. 1-10.

[5] Reporter, "The Future Policy of the Magazine," *Women's Magazine*, Vol. 5, No. 12 (December 1919), pp. 1-3.

[6] Yan Bing, *Women in History*, p. 6.

[7] *Ibid.*

In the same year, however, Feng Fei's book *On Women* addressed the doctrine,

(1) But the content is extremely brief and crude.

The author himself later described the book as "incomplete" and "very hasty" because of the rush of time, "and the incompleteness of the references and reflections".

(2) It is naturally difficult for such writings to attract attention.

From August 3, 1921, Xia Yazun introduced the female-centrism theory to China under the title of "The Female Centrism Theory", based on Sakai Toshihiko's interpretation.

The translation was serialized in *Women's Review*, a supplement to the newly founded Republic of China Daily, and was published in full in January 1922.

In the same month, Li Da also based on Sakai Toshihiko's translation, and a translation of the same entitled "The Female Center" was published.

Judging by the timing of the publication, it seems that the two were translating at the same time.

But in fact, according to Xia Yazun's own statement, when the Women's Review began publishing his translation, he had already translated half of the book.

Because the book was originally translated by the Social and Economic Book Series, the society was later suspended for some reason, and Xia himself was unable to complete the remaining half of the translation due to many affairs.

At that time, the Women's Review agreed to publish it, which gave him the opportunity to complete the translation of the whole book one after another.

(3) As for Li Da's translation, according to the translator's preface, it was completed before July 6, 1921.

[4] It is worth mentioning that in June 1921, the Shanghai Communist Group established the New Era Book Series, which aimed to "popularize the New Culture Movement" by compiling "literature, art, science, philosophy, social issues, and other indispensable knowledge in daily life", "providing a starting point for those who are interested in the study of advanced knowledge", and "saving time and money in the reading world".

(5) Li Da and Xia Yazun were both editors of the agency, and (6)

they both translated "Women's Centrality", but in the end, the first book published by the New Era Book Series was Li Da's translation, not Xia Ya Zun's translation, which was first serialized in "Women's Review".

The reason for this is that Li Da completed the translation first. On October 12, 1921, Mao Dun, then the head of the book series, wrote a letter to Zhou Zuoren (1885-1967), informing him that Li Da's translation of "The Theory of Women's Centrality" had been delivered.

(7) In other words, the New Era Book Series had decided to adopt Li Da's translation at least in October.

Because only in this way can the publisher have enough time to arrange subsequent revisions, proofreading, distribution, etc. Xia Yazun's translation was not completed until December.

In the case that both had translated the translation of the "Female Centrism", it was natural that the book series did not need to rush the Xia translation to be printed before January 1922.

References:

[1] Feng Fei (ed.), *On Women* (Shanghai: Zhonghua Book Company, 1920), pp. 113-114.

[2] Feng Fei, "Introduction to the Women's Question", including Cai Shangsi (ed.): *Compendium of Materials on the History of*

Modern Chinese Thought (Hangzhou: Zhejiang People's Publishing House, 1982), vol. 1, p. 667.

[3] Xia Yazun, "Women's Center Theory," Women's Review, a supplement to the Republic of China Daily, No. 24 (January 11, 1922), p. 3.

[4] Sakai Toshihiko (eds.) and Li Da (trans.): The Theory of the Female Center (Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1922).

[5] "The Origin of the Editing of the "New Era Series", Enlightenment, Supplement of the Republic of China Daily, vol. 4 (June 24, 1921), p. 1.

[6] Book Advertisement, Oriental Magazine, Vol. 19, Nos. 9, 10, 11 (1922); "The Origin of the Editing of the "New Era Series", p. 1.

[7] Li Yuzhen, Zhou Chundong, Liu Yulian (et al., eds.), Materials of the Literary Research Society (I) (Beijing: Intellectual Property Press, 2010), p. 657.

Both Li Da and Xia Mianzun's translations of the book "The Centrality of Women" stemmed primarily from the significant historical background of the "May Fourth" New Culture Movement.

In the historical context of pursuing ideological and cultural reform, women's liberation, being an essential aspect of social change, garnered attention from the vast majority of intellectuals of that time, with Li Da and Xia Mianzun being no exceptions. First, let us look at the former.

In October 1919, Li Da published "The Theory of Women's Liberation," which marked the beginning of his sustained attention to women's issues.

Subsequently, he published works such as "An Appeal Against Defamation of Male-Female Social Interaction," "Introducing Several Female Revolutionaries," and "History of the Women's Movement," among others.

In addition to writing, Li Da also translated foreign women's literature, including titles such as "The View on Women in Socialism," "Lenin's Theory of Women's Liberation," "Women's Liberation in Labor and Agriculture in Russia," and "Gentlemen's

Privileges and Women's Liberation," among others.

Moreover, he presided over the main editorial work of the first women's publication established by the Communist Party, "Voice of Women," and founded a commoner's girls' school to cultivate talents for the women's movement.

Though Xia Mianzun's body of work is less extensive than Li Da's, as a supporter of the New Culture Movement, he showed considerable sympathy for the plight of women.

During the translation of "The Center of Women," he wrote an article titled "The Status of Women as Represented in Chinese Characters," in which he classifies and analyzes 175 Chinese characters featuring the female radical, proving, from a linguistic perspective, the historically marginalized and humiliating position of Chinese women.

As for why both Xia Mianzun and Li Da chose Sakai Riko's translation as the original text, their reasons differ.

Although Li Da understood English and directly read the original work by Ward, he ultimately opted to translate Sakai Riko's compiled version.

This decision was based on the fact that, on the one hand, he discovered through textual comparison that Sakai Riko had entirely explained Ward's original work; on the other hand, he believed Sakai Riko's writing was clear and smooth. Thus, rather than reading Ward's original, it was preferable to engage with Sakai Riko's version.

Additionally, Xia Mianzun's translation of "The Center of Women" was not entirely his voluntary choice. In 1920, while teaching at Hunan First Normal School, he was entrusted by Chen Wangdao (1891-1977) to translate the book on behalf of Chen for the Social Economic Series Publishing House.

As for why both Li Da and Chen Wangdao were fond of Sakai Riko, aside from the intrinsic value of the work itself, it also included the close relationship between Sakai Riko and the Chinese Revolution as well as Chinese intellectuals.

References:

[1] Li Heming [Li Da], "On Women's Liberation," *Liberation and Transformation*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (October 1919), pp. 18-32.

[2] Heming [Li Da], "A New Wish to Denigrate the Social Interaction of Men and Women", *Women's Review*, No. 7, supplement of the *Republic of China Daily* (September 14, 1921), pp. 3-4.

[3] Heming (ed.), "(Introducing Several Women Revolutionaries", Women's Review, a supplement to the Republic of China Daily, Nos. 11 and 12 (October 1921), p. 1.

[4] Li Heming (ed.), "(History of the Feminist Movement", Women's Review, a supplement to the Republic of China Daily, Nos. 59 to 70 (November-December 1922).

[5] Heming, "The Concept of Women at the Bottom of Socialism", Women's Review, a supplement to the Republic of China Daily, Nos. 10 and 11 (October 1921).

[6] Li Da (transliteration), "Lenin's Theory of Women's Emancipation," New Youth, Vol. 9, No. 2 (June 1921).

[7] Yamakawa Kikuei (ed.) and Li Da (trans.), "The Liberation of Women in Labor and Peasant Russia," New Youth, Vol. 9, No. 3 (July 1921).

[8] Yamakawa Kikuei and Li Da, "The Gentleman and Women's Liberation," Women's Magazine, Vol. 7, No. 6 (June 1921), pp. 22-26.

[9] 丐尊, "The Female Background Status Expressed in Chinese Characters", Women's Review, No. 72, supplement of the Republic of China Daily (December 20, 1922). J), p. 1.

[10] Li Da, "Translator's Preface", in Sakai Toshihiko (commentary) and Li Da (trans.): The Theory of the Female Center (Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1922), p. 1.

[11] Xia Yazun, "The Theory of Female Centrism", p. 3.

The socialist Sakai Ryiho has always focused on the Chinese revolution. (1) The articles he published include 'The Nature of the Chinese Revolution', 'The Future of the Chinese Revolution', 'The Issues of the Chinese Revolution', 'Sun Yat-sen and Baron Itagaki', etc.

(2) In his early years, he had close ties with Zhang Taiyan (1869-1936), Zhang Ji (1882-1947), Liu Shipai (1884-1919), He Zhen (3), and others.

During the 'May Fourth' period, he frequently interacted with members of the Chinese Communist Group in Japan, such as Shi Zun-tong (1899-1970), (4) Dai Jitao (1891-1949) (5).

At the same time, intellectuals in China also began to pay attention to Sakai Ryiho.

His works, such as 'The Woman Question', (6) 'The Evolution of Gender Relations', (7) 'The Theory of Free Love', (8) 'The Current State of the Japanese Proletarian Party', (9) 'The Process of Social Evolution', (10) 'The Origins of Family Private Property and the State', (11) were successively translated into Chinese.

According to statistics by Ishikawa Yoshihiro, between 1919 and 1922, approximately 22 works by Sakai Ryiho were translated and published by intellectuals of the 'May Fourth' Movement.

[12] The introduction of these works made a significant contribution to the dissemination of Marxism in China.

Sakai Ryiho directly influenced and inspired the thoughts of people such as Li Dazhao.

(13) In 1933, Sakai Ryiho passed away.

The 'Hankou Post Worker' published a special article to commemorate his life, stating that the passing of the gentleman meant that "not only did Japanese workers lose a powerful mentor", "but it also invoked tears of mourning from the oppressed peoples and workers of East Asia".

References:

[1] Sakai Ryiho joined the Socialist Association as early as 1901. In 1903, he established the 'Common People's Society' with another socialist, Kōtoku Shūsui (1871-1911). In 1906, he founded the Japanese Socialist Party. In 1908, he was imprisoned due to the Red Flag Incident. In 1920, he led the establishment of the Japanese Socialist Alliance. In 1922, he participated in the founding of the Japanese Communist Party.

In addition to his involvement in organisational structures, Sakai Ryiho also engaged in extensive public outreach, such as publishing the 'Common People's News' weekly and founding the 'New Society' magazine. Furthermore, he translated a large amount of Western literature, introducing European and American socialist thought, the trends of the Russian Revolution, and Western utopian literature to the Japanese people, including 'The Outline of Socialism', 'The Communist Manifesto' (co-translated with Kōtoku Shūsui), 'Utopian and

Scientific Socialism', 'Essentials of Socialist Doctrine', 'Dialectical Materialism', 'An Exegesis of Historical Materialism', 'Labour and Capital', 'The October Revolution', 'The Republic of Utopia' (now translated as 'News from Utopia'), etc. Regarding women's issues, aside from the work focused on in this article, Sakai Ryiho also translated and authored 'The Solution to the Woman Question', 'The History of the Struggle Between the Sexes', 'The Development of Gender Relations', 'Gender Relations in a Free Society', among others.

[2] Li Caihua: "The Socialist Ideas of Sakai Toshihiko and Their Impact on the Chinese Revolution," *Journal of Inner Mongolia University of Technology (Social Sciences Edition)*, 2008, No. 2 (November 2008), p. 16.

[3] Wan Shiguo: "He Zhen Timeline," in Feng Mingzhu (chief editor): "Research on the Society of the Late Qing Dynasty and Yangzhou" (Taipei: Yuanliu Publishing Company, 2011), p. 504.

[4] Ishikawa Yoshihiro (author), Zhang Huicai (translator): "Shi Cuntong and the Chinese Communist Party's Japanese Group," in Central Committee for Party History Research, Central Archives (eds.): "Materials on the History of the Communist Party of China, Vol. 68" (Beijing: Publishing House of the History of the Communist Party of China, 1998), pp. 174, 176, 180.

[5] Wang Ye: "The Revolutionary Literary Movement of the Kuomintang During the National Revolutionary Period (1919-1927)" (Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 2014), pp. 15-16.

[6] Sakai Toshihiko (author), Tao Fu (translator): "The Essence of the Woman Problem," in Zhang Xicheng (chief editor): "New Women" Vol. 4, April and May Issues (1929), pp. 50-60, 26-42; Sakai Toshihiko (author), Zuo Shuchang (translator): "The Essence of the Woman Problem," Supplement of Hebei Republic Daily, Column "Jia" No. 12 (March 1929), pp. 1-6.

[7] Sakai Toshihiko (author), Guo Xujing (translator): "The Evolution of Gender Relations," "New Tide" Vol. 1, No. 5 (May 1919), pp. 78-85.

[8] Sakai Toshihiko (author), Bo Kun (translator): "On Free Love," Supplement of the Republic Daily "Women's Review" No. 12 (October 19, 1921), p. 2.

[9] Sakai Toshihiko (author), Qin Rong (translator): "The Current Situation of the Proletarian Party in Japan," "Weekly Review (Supplement of the Shanghai Republic Daily)" Vol. 3, No. 30 (November 1929), pp. 9-11.

[10] Sakai Toshihiko (author), [unnamed translator]: "The Process of Social Evolution," "Microphone (Shanghai 1928)" Vol. 2, No. 3 (October 1930), pp. 55-72.

[11] Sakai Toshihiko (speaker), Zuo Shuchang (translator): "The Origin of Family Private Property and the State," "Tai Dong Monthly" Vol. 2, No. 3 (November 1928), pp. 1-15.

[12] Li Caihua: "The Socialist Ideas of Sakai Toshihiko and Their Impact on the Chinese Revolution," p. 16.

[13] Goto Nobuko (author), Wang Qing et al. (translators): "Research on Li Dazhao's Thought" (Beijing: China Social Publishing House, 1999), p. 70.

"A Collective Mourning for the Oppressed Nations and Laborers of East Asia." (1) Given Sakai Toshihiko's significant influence in the Chinese intellectual community, it is understandable why Li Da and others chose to translate his work 'Female-Centrism Theory.'

Additionally, the personal experiences and pursuits of Li Da and Chen Wangdao also contributed to this decision.

Before translating 'Female-Centrism Theory,' Li Da studied in Japan twice, from 1913 to 1914 and from 1917 to 1920, and began to pay attention to and study Marxism-Leninism starting in 1917.

He took the opportunity of being in Japan to write letters about the issues that perplexed him in Sakai's articles, entrusting them to Shi Cuntong for delivery to Sakai, as a means of seeking guidance.

(2) Chen Wangdao's experiences are very similar to those of Li Da.

From 1915 to 1919, he traveled to Japan for studies, during which he met Japanese socialist scholars such as Kawakami Hajime (1879-1946) and Yamakawa Hitoshi (1880-1958), frequently reading their translated works on Marxism and participating in the promotion of the October Revolution and Marxism; in 1920, he translated the 'Communist Manifesto' co-translated by Sakai Toshihiko and Kōtoku Shusui.

(3) Although it cannot be confirmed whether Chen Wangdao had direct contact with Sakai Toshihiko, given Chen's study experiences, translation activities and Sakai's influence among socialists in China and Japan at the time, it is improbable that Chen was unaware of Sakai himself.

Therefore, when discussing women's issues, he, like Li Da, focused on Sakai's works.

How, then, did the Female Centrism Theory reach Japan?

After the publication of 'Pure Sociology' in the United States in 1903, the book's English version was immediately introduced in Japan.

As for the Japanese translation, it was not completed until 1924 by Ishikawa Ko.

(4) However, the Female Centrism Theory contained within 'Pure Sociology' had already been introduced by Takano Shigezo in the magazine 'Shin Shin Fujin' back in 1914, and in 1915, Sakai Toshihiko revisited this theory in the magazine 'Twentieth Century.'

(5) In 1916, Sakai Toshihiko translated chapter 14 of 'Pure Sociology,' which discusses the Female Centrism Theory, into Japanese, titling it 'Female Centrism Theory.'

However, Sakai did not consider his work as a translation.

He felt that terms like 'explanation,' 're-narration,' or 'summarizing' (6) were more appropriate.

Through text comparison, it can be observed that Sakai did make certain modifications in his translation.

References:

[1] Xun Zhen: (In Remembrance of Sakai Toshihiko), *Hankou Post Workers*, Issue 6-7, 1933, Page 4.

[2] Qian Haoping: "Non-filial" Youth Shi Cuntong, *New Beijing News*, July 3, 2011, Page A12.

[3] For research on Chen Wangdao's translation of *The Communist Manifesto*, please refer to Chen Liwei: "Making Language More Revolutionary — The Translated Versions and the Sharpness of Translated Terms of *The Communist Manifesto*," in Jiuxiang (Ed.): *New Historiography: Concepts, Texts, Methods* (Volume II) (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2008), Pages 189-210; Omura Izumi (Author), Zhang Libo (Translator): *The Dissemination of *The Communist Manifesto*: A Survey of Translation History*, *Economic Dynamics*, Issue 6 (June 2008), Pages 13-17; Omura Izumi (Author), Chen Hao, Zhang Libo (Translators): *The Publication History of *The Communist Manifesto* and Issues in Its Chinese Translation*, in Yang Fengcheng (Ed.): *Studies of Chinese Communist History and Theory*, Volume 2 (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2015), Pages 243-268, 303-304; Wang Dongfeng: *The Historical Memory of Translations — Interpretation of Chen Wangdao's Translation of *The Communist Manifesto*,* in Wang Dongfeng: *Interdisciplinary

Translation Studies* (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2014), Pages 264-288.

[4] In the preface of the book *Women-Centered Theory*, Sakai Toshihiko discusses that Wakamiya Unosuke also translated the entire work of Lester Ward's *Pure Sociology*, which is soon to be published, but the author has not found this translation as of now.

[5] Mizuta Tamaki: *The Reception of Lester Ward's *Women-Centered Theory*,* *Comparative Cultural Studies*, Issue 29 (March 2010), Page 20.

[6] Sakai Toshihiko (Commentary): *Preface to *Women-Centered Theory*,* *Women-Centered Theory* (Tokyo: Makuminsha, 1916), Page 1.

"Causing a chaotic situation" | P247

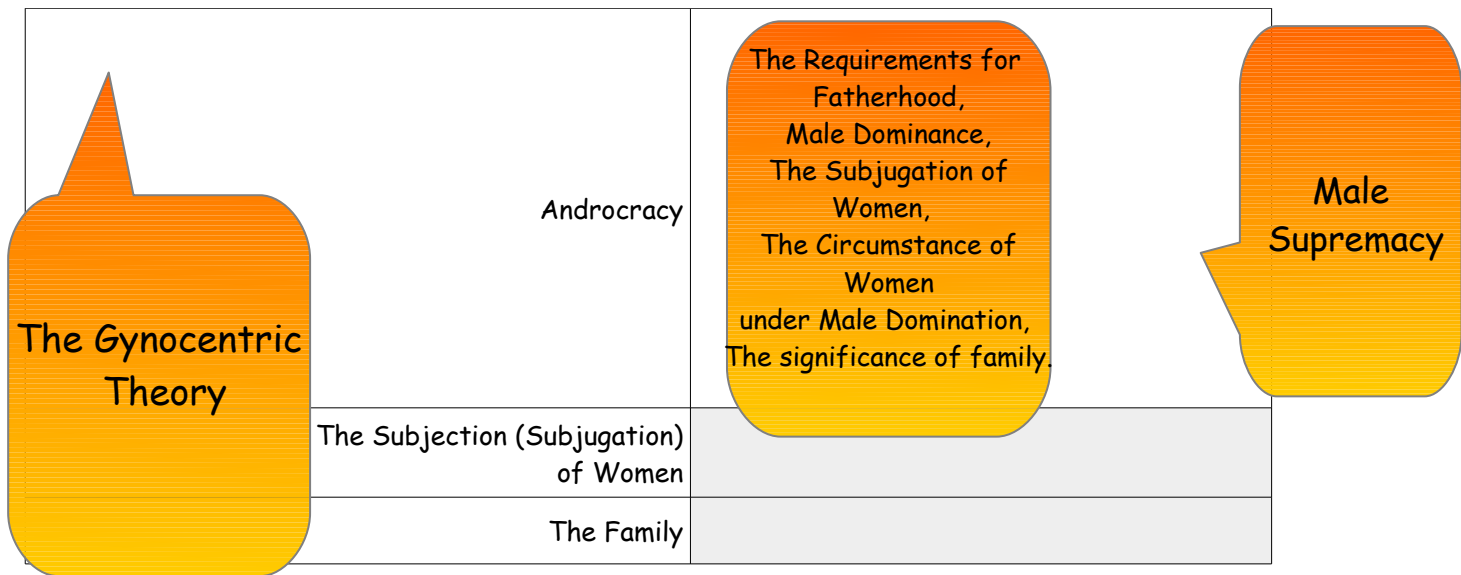
In the translation by Sakai Toshihiko, certain modifications were indeed made.

Firstly, for instance, he integrated three sections from Ward's original text discussing "fertilization," "conjugation" (one type of sexual reproduction), and "origin of the male sex" into the chapter on reproductive methods; he also adjusted the sections on "the subjugation of women" and "the family" to align with the portion on male superiority.

Table 1 Section:

| Lester F Ward | Sakai Toshihiko |
|---------------------------|--|
| Reproduction | Androcentric theory and Gynocentric theory |
| The androcentric theory | Content of the androcentric theory |
| History of the Theory | History of the gynocentric perspective |
| The Biological imperative | Natures Commands/Imperatives |
| Reproduction | <div>Reproductive Methods</div> <div>Reproduction & development, Asexual reproduction, Cross-fertilisation, Copulation, Male origin.</div> |
| Fertilisation | |
| Conjugation | |
| Origin of the Male Sex | |
| Sexual Selection | Male appendages of derivation |
| Male Efflorescence | Male Development |
| Primitive Woman | |
| Gynocracy | Female Supremacy |

The Gynocentric Theory



Page 248:

Continued from table 1 (above)

| Lester F Ward | Sakai Toshihiko |
|-------------------------|--|
| Marriage | Marriage via Commercial exchange and also via Kidnap/Abduction |
| Male Sexual Selection | Male elimination |
| Womenfolk in history | Womenfolk across history |
| The future of womenfolk | The future of women |
| Recapitulation | Summary of the above |

In addition, Sakai Rihiko structured several subsections under each chapter and proposed subtitles, making the structure clearer and the content more intuitive than the original text by Ward, which was not further subdivided.

In the specific translation process, Sakai Rihiko did not convey the original text's meaning sentence by sentence, but rather summarised and explained Ward's main viewpoints and arguments in a third-person tone.

For example, in the sentence 'Although in a humorous vein, I set forth the greater part of the principles and many of the facts of what I now call the gynocentric theory,' (1) Sakai Rihiko handled it as 'Ward first presented his gynocentric theory in today's lecture.'

(2) Firstly, the first-person 'I' in the original text was replaced with 'Ward'; secondly, the Japanese text mentioned the main idea that 'this lecture laid the foundation for the gynocentric theory,' without specifically stating 'set forth the greater part of the principles and many of the facts of the gynocentric theory.'

Finally, Sakai Rihiko also deleted some examples, repetitive descriptions, and irrelevant details; for instance, a section on 'women in primitive societies' was removed due to its overlap with the subsequent section on 'female superiority.'

However, concerning the overall content, these revisions did not distort or alter the basic viewpoints of 'the gynocentric theory.'

Some scholars believe that Sakai Rihiko often added his own criticisms of the original text during translation; a specific example is that 'Sakai Rihiko praised Ward as a revolutionary thinker: just as Copernicus's heliocentric theory overturned the geocentric theory and Darwin's theory of evolution overturned anthropocentrism, Ward's theory overthrew the myth of male centrism.'

(3) However, this is not Sakai Rihiko's subjective judgement but reflects Ward's own statements.

In the English original, Ward explained the significance of the gynocentric theory as follows:

"All modern anatomists know how the facts that are now regarded as demonstrating the horizontal position of the ancestors of man, and in general those..."

References

[1] Ward, *Pure Sociology*, p. 297.

[2] Sakai Toshihiko (Commentary): "The Female-Centred Discourse", p. 11.

[3] Peng Xiaoyan: "In Pursuit of Beauty — Zhang Jingsheng's "New Female Centre" Theory and Darwin's "Sexual Selection"

Theory", "Journals of Chinese Literature and Philosophy Studies", Issue 44 (March 2014), p. 68.

...that establish the doctrine of evolution, were treated by the older students of the human body—rejected, ignored, and disliked, as intruders that interfered their investigation...."

Indeed, the androcentric theory may be profitably compared with the geocentric theory, and the gynæcocratic with the heliocentric (1).

Comparing Sakai Rihon's statements, it can be observed that the only change made by the latter to the original text was the addition of the names Copernicus and Darwin.

As for the substitution of the theory of evolution for anthropocentrism, the heliocentric theory for geocentrism, and people's rejection of the female-centrism theory, these are all contents that are already present in the original text.

Li Da and Xia Mianzun faithfully conveyed Sakai Rihon's translation during their work.

Both Li Da and Xia Mianzun had studied in Japan, and they had engaged in translation work before translating 'The Female-Centrism Theory.'

The former translated 'Women and Socialism,' while the latter served as a Japanese language teacher and translator at the Zhejiang Normal School as early as 1908.

(2) In terms of both Japanese language proficiency and translation experience, both are capable of translating 'The Female-Centrism Theory.'

A text comparison also reveals that both adhered to the principle of faithful translation, without additions or deletions, fully conveying the original meaning of Sakai Rihon.

Here's an example, Li's translation: During such a long period, the elimination of males was limited to a certain class in society, causing various changes in female beauty, which contributed to its complexity.

Because female beauty, like male beauty, is completely a secondary characteristic, the expression of beauty is by no means always enduring.

In youth, no matter how beautiful a woman is, once she ages, her charm fades, and beauty also declines.

Furthermore, at that time, female beauty was limited to physical beauty, ignoring spiritual beauty.

Therefore, the continuity of beauty was even less than that of women today.

(3) Xia's translation: The elimination of males during such a long period was only confined to a certain class in society, which caused various changes in female beauty and significantly contributed to the complexity of female beauty.

Originally, female beauty, like male beauty, was also a secondary characteristic, and its discovery is by no means permanent.

Therefore, no matter how beautiful a woman is during her youth, as she ages, her beauty naturally declines.

Moreover, at that time, female beauty was purely limited to physical beauty, entirely unrelated to spiritual beauty; thus, the continuity of beauty was less than that of women today.

(4) A comparison of the two shows that both Li Da and Xia Mianzun employed a literal translation method, and their translations are quite similar.

If there are subtle differences, it is that Li Da's translation is relatively more fluent and readable.

References:

[1] Ward, Pure Sociology, p. 302.

[2] Shang Jinlin: 'The Life of Mr. Xia Mianzun', in Collection of Truth Seeking (Hefei: Anhui Education Publishing House, 2004), p. 126.

[3] Sakai Rihiko (Commentary), Li Da (Translation): The Female Centrism Theory, p. 93.

[4] Sakai Rihiko (Commentary), Xia Mianzun (Translation): The Female Centrism Theory (Shanghai: Shanghai Literary and Arts Publishing House, 1925), p. 109.

The translation by Xia Mianzun is influenced somewhat more by Japanese expressions, such as "long years of time," "a class of society," and "the characteristics of secondary sexual nature," which are direct translations from Japanese.

In 1924, Xia Mianzun's translated works were compiled into a standalone volume and published by Shanghai Minzhi Book Company; in 1925, it was included in the World Marriage Chinese Series by Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House for a second edition.

However, feedback from critics such as Ye Keping (1912-2000) (1) suggests that despite Xia Mianzun's translation being available to readers earlier than Li Da's, the latter had a much larger impact at the time.

The reason for this relates to Li Da being one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party and his various political and social practices in the intellectual and educational circles of the time.

His translation went through multiple reprints, was included in the New Era series, and in 1933 was listed by Commercial Press as one of the "must-read books on women's health".

(2) It was later included in the "Social Science Series" edited by He Bingsong and Liu Binglin; advertisements for it frequently appeared in journals such as (3)"Oriental Magazine," (4)"Student Magazine," and (5)"Women's Magazine (Shanghai)."

The extensive promotion inevitably further expanded the influence of Li Da's translation.

Section II

After the theory of female centrism was introduced to China by the translations of Li Da and Xia Mianzun, it triggered ongoing, intense discussions.

In terms of timeframe, from the introduction of the book "The Theory of Female Centrism" in July 1922 by the "Women's Magazine (Shanghai)" until the most difficult year of the War of Resistance in 1943, articles on this theory frequently appeared in newspapers.

The intensity of the debates were described by some at the time as:

"each stubbornly adhering to their own biases, publishing their own theories, creating a confusing mess."

(6) Reviewing the relevant writings reveals that there was indeed a lack of effective communication and dialogue among the disputants (debaters), and the situation of talking past each other was very evident.

However, this also reflects, from another perspective, how deeply rooted the theory of female centrism had become in people's minds; otherwise, there wouldn't be such nonsensical

and off-topic following works as "The feminist centered doctrine" and "Flourishing expressions with a female focus."

References:

- [1] Ye Keping: "Research on Female-Centered Theory (Unfinished)," *Women's Resonance*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 1932), p. 36.
- [2] Book Advertisement, *Eastern Miscellany*, Vol. 30, No. 23 (December 1933), located on pages "(Women's) 20" to "(Women's) 21."
- [3] Book Advertisement, *Eastern Miscellany*, Vol. 19, Nos. 9, 10, 11 (1922).
- [4] "Book Review Introduction: Female-Centrism Theory," *Student*, Vol. 9, No. 6 (June 1922), p. 129.
- [5] "New Book Introduction: Female-Centrism Theory," *Women's Magazine (Shanghai)*, Vol. 8, No. 7 (July 1922), p. 23.
- [6] Ye Ye: "Male-Centrism and Female-Centrism Theory," *Fujian Women*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (November 1943), p. 15.
- [7] Hu Haizhou: "The Doctrine of Female-Centrism," *Women's Magazine (Shanghai)*, Vol. 12, No. 9 (September 1926), pp. 2-5.
- [8] Fu Yanchang: "Flourishing Writing Centered on Women," *True Beauty and Goodness, Female Writers Issue* (January 1929), pp. 1-11.

The phrase 'creating chaos and confusion' reflects a tumultuous situation where, despite the absence of organized debates, we can discern the primary evaluations on the theory of female centrism made by individuals influenced by various ideologies, as expressed in articles scattered across different periodicals.

These evaluations pertain to the future dynamics of gender relations and the 'misreading' of Ward's work.

Li Da translated 'The Theory of Female Centrism' with the aim of reconstructing the relationship between men and women.

He criticized the historical and contemporary subjugation and enslavement of women by men, highlighting that women's positions in terms of morals, customs, law, politics, and economics are inherently subordinate to men.

He denounced the modern notion of 'natural human rights', asserting that both 'human rights' and 'civil rights' essentially only refer to men's rights, excluding women's rights entirely.

Consequently, this has led to a societal structure centered around men, where all thoughts and actions suited to this male-centric society are adopted, while those that do not conform are rejected.

Men, thus endowed with power and authority, have become akin to dictatorial monarchs, whereas women have been completely stripped of all rights and freedoms.

(1) In this historical context, Ward's theory of female centrism serves to challenge the male-centric society and disrupt prevailing societal norms.

In the preface to the translation of 'The Theory of Female Centrism', Li Da articulates:

"I previously held a notion that most people believe men are the protectors of women, and that a woman's worldview is merely the detritus of men's thoughts; however, I believe women are the true protectors of men, and that men's moral understanding and professional knowledge are developed and nurtured by women.

Yet, this perspective lacks validation.

Now, after reading the Theory of Female Centrism, I feel that my previous assertions were not fundamentally erroneous."

(2) By rejecting the popular male-centric narrative and emphasizing men's dependency on women, the goal is to highlight the value of women.

So, how can women, currently in a subservient position, break free from their constraints and attain full equality and freedom?

The solution proposed by Li Da is:

"Men and women who aspire to reform society must develop a collective class consciousness and work hand in hand in the transformation effort, striving against the shared adversaries

of society to establish a community life based on the equality of both sexes."

(3) In other words, in order for women to achieve equality and freedom, they need to unite with those men who are committed to social reform, cultivate a class consciousness, and partake in the struggle.

This is also one of the purposes behind Li Da's translation of this book.

[4] The theory of class regarding women's perspectives emerged during the 'May Fourth' movement and was a crucial component of the women's liberation thinking at that time.

[5] The earliest application of a class method in analyzing women's issues was by Li Da zhao.

In February 1919, he published an article titled 'The Women's Issues Post-War' in 'New Youth', pointing out that the women's rights movement possesses a class nature, wherein the demands and interests of middle-class women are fundamentally different from those of working-class women.

(6) Later, Tian Han proposed the concepts of the third and fourth classes, corresponding to the middle class women and proletarian women described by Li Da zhao, respectively. He believed that the fourth class women were the true advocates of thorough reform.

References:

[1] Li Heming: "On Women's Liberation," p. 22.

[2] Li Da: "Translator's Preface," pp. 1-2.

[3] Ibid., p. 3.

[4] Ibid.

[5] For related studies, see Wang Fei: "Unprecedented Traces—1851-1930: A Study of the Development of Women's Thought and Literature in China" (Beijing: Commercial Press, 2004), pp. 387-429.

[6] Li Dazhao: "The Woman Problem After the War," *New Youth*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (February 1919), pp. 141-147.

(1) This perspective on women was recognized among Chinese Marxists.

By 1921, the communist group supported by Chen Duxiu (1879-1942) in Guangdong established the magazine "Labor and Women," in which the "editorial on initiation" written by Shen Xuanlu unified the issues of women and the working class.

[2] However, not everyone agreed with discussing women's issues from a class standpoint.

Firstly, the original author Ward did not support this view.

In his book "Pure Sociology," he did not address how to achieve gender equality specifically, but it is certain that he did not support the social revolution proposed by socialists.

Ward acknowledged that class struggle and racial struggle are hallmarks of human historical development, but he believed these struggles to be meaningless; he opposed free competition and individualism and hoped that in the future, an enlightened government would eliminate these struggles in a planned and purposeful manner.

He supported all popular movements aimed at improving society while opposing radical social change.

(3) Secondly, another mainstream thought on women's liberation

during the May Fourth period, namely feminism, also opposed the unification of women's issues with class issues.

From the feminists' perspective, "the purpose of feminism, simply stated, is to strive for equal opportunities for men and women in education, economy, and politics, without discrimination or distinction based on gender."

(4) Therefore, an author using the pseudonym Jun Shan, while discussing female centrism, suggested that women should seize their rightful rights and obligations from men.

(5) Chen Xue zhao (1906-1991) also strongly called for women to solve women's issues themselves; she cited Xia Man zun, who had always been concerned about women's issues, pointing out that his assertion in the magazine "New Woman" that a wife's responsibility at home is sacred, as long as she does not feel pain internally, indeed comes from a male perspective and interest.

She warned women that if the women's movement relies on men to resolve their issues, women can only fall into deeper predicaments.

Thus, she declared that women are fundamentally in opposition to men and cannot cooperate with them.

(6) In response, Chen Wangdao, who also held a Marxist view on women and chose to translate "Female Centrism," remarked that we believe merely demanding that current women be the same as current men is not the fundamental way to discuss women's

issues.

Most men today have not achieved a "human life."

What significance does it hold if women's demands are only limited to obtaining the same existing living conditions as men?

What benefits does it bring to the construction of future society?

Therefore, we are critical of those who are purely "feminists."

References:

[1] Tian Han: "The Women's Movement of the Fourth Class," Youth China, Vol. 1, No. 4 (October 1919), pp. 21-22.

[2] Shen Xuanlu: "The Main Ideas of the Publication 'Labour and Women'," Labour and Women, No. 1 (February 1921), p. 1.

[3] See Lester F. Ward, "Social Classes in the Light of Modern Sociology Theory," American Journal of Sociology 13, no. 5 (March 1908), pp. 617-627.

[4] Gao Shan: "The Emergence of New Individuals," Women's Magazine, Vol. 9, No. 10 (October 1923), pp. 15-17.

[5] Jun Shan: "Social Theory Centered on Women and Women's Liberation," Rose Weekly, No. 20 (April 1927), p. 1.

[6] Chen Xuezhao: "To Men," in Zhang Xichen (ed.): "New Woman," Vol. 1, No. 12 (December 1926), pp. 897-901.

Therefore, we are unanimous in our opposition to those statements made by purely "feminists".

We do not subscribe to the fallacy of "elevating women to the same status as men";

Let's not talk about the ridiculous "equality between men and women";

We advocate liberating all the constraints that have been imposed on women and allowing them to develop their abilities freely.

We must mercilessly attack all ideas and systems that can become new shackles.

[1] In Chen Wangdao's view, the rights that feminists value on the same level as men are really not worth mentioning.

Under the premise that men are not free and live a non-"human life", what kind of rights can women win?

Therefore, he criticized those who regarded education and rights as prerequisites for the women's movement, believing that they did not understand the true meaning of women's issues.

[2] As for the ways Marxists will adopt, in order to realize women's freedom and rights, Feng Hefa (1910-1997) made a specific summary when analyzing how female centrism can be combined with current women's liberation.

He claimed that women's issues had reached a new stage, and that it went hand in hand with the labor issues in capitalist society;

(3) believe that the theory of the feminist movement that demands gender equality is no longer suitable for social development;

The object of women's struggle is no longer men, but the entire capitalist social organization;

Male workers are no longer enemies of women, but allies in the process of women's struggle.

(4) In order for the women's liberation movement to succeed, it must unite with the proletarian movement and jointly launch an attack on the feudal system, feudal forces and capitalist social organizations based on the relationship of economic exploitation.

(5) In order to prove the correctness and effectiveness of this goal and strategy of struggle, in 1921, "New Youth" published a special issue "Russia and Women", which talked about the great changes in the situation of Russian women before and after the October Revolution, from being called "beasts" to later occupying a place in Soviet congresses and high committees.

In the eyes of socialist believers, the reason why Russian women were able to obtain such equal rights was that they united with the workers to overthrow the capitalist system.

(6) While some commentators still regard men as one of the objects of women's struggle (the other two are international

capitalism and warlords), (7) the socialists' answer is that as long as the capitalist system is overthrown and the dictatorship of the proletariat is realized, then women's issues will be automatically solved;

References:

[1] "Declaration," Women's Review, Supplement to the Republic of China Daily, Issue 1 (August 3, 1921), pages 1-2. It should be noted that this article was published anonymously in Issue 1 of Women's Review, but it was indeed written by the then-editor Chen Wangdao. For more details, see Lin Hong, Lou Feng (editors): "Complete Works of Chen Wangdao" (Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press, 2011), Vol. 5, pages 68-71.

[2] Op. cit., page 1.

[3] Feng He Fa: "Women's Liberation and the Female-Centered Theory (Unfinished)," Weekly of Labor University, Vol. 4, Issue 9 (November 3, 1930), page 14.

[4] Ibid., page 12.

[5] Feng He Fa: "Women's Liberation and the Female-Centered Theory (Continued)," Weekly of Labor University, Vol. 4, Issue 10 (November 10, 1930), page 42.

[6] N. Bukharin (author), Zhen Ying (translator): "Russian 'Bolshevism' and Laboring Women," New Youth, Vol. 8, Issue 5 (January 1921), pages 6-8.

[7] Shan Chuan Ju Rong (author), Li Hua (translator): "Male-Centered Theory and Female-Centered Theory," *Revolutionary Women*, Issue 5 (June 1927), page 5.

(1) "Those who belittle women and regard them as mere playthings are nothing but those old masters and young masters; as for the proletariat, they would never act in such a way."

[2] By 1943, the connotation of the female-centrism discourse had gained new content.

Shih Cheh-tsun (pen name Yeh Yeh, 1905-2003) analyzed the dynamics between the sexes from a nationalist perspective, integrating Ward's theories to discuss the direction of gender relations.

In response to criticisms that women are selfish and narrow-minded, Shih pointed out that even if women do possess these flaws, they are entirely a result of male influence and not inherent traits; for instance, with "the teachings of patriotism and love for the people," women could be successfully transformed.

(3) He supported gender equality, not out of a need to improve women's status, but rather because he deemed it particularly important for the nation, stating, "After the war of resistance, nation-building will be an even more arduous task; with just twenty million people's strength, if we can suddenly add another twenty million, nation-building can surely be completed ahead of schedule."

(4) Therefore, Shih emphatically emphasized women's

responsibilities.

He criticized those women who are "idle, merely consuming without contributing" as shameful, (5) aligning with the perspective later presented by an author using the pseudonym Qixin in the "Women's Magazine (Beijing)."

This author noted that women in Xikang were leading a life centered around women.

(6) They bore heavy labor, from household management to fertilizing and harvesting, to caring for livestock—all responsibilities resting on women.

They had nearly no rest each day, "fulfilling their responsibilities to society"; in contrast, urban women were merely "consumers of society," "playthings of men," and had "virtually lost their human form."

(7) The author hoped to inspire every woman in the city, during the toughest year of the war in 1943, to contribute to the nation just as the women of Xikang did.

This approach, defining female-centrism by women's obligations to society and the nation, conflicts with the class-based feminist perspective that aims to transcend national and ethnic boundaries, and it is considerably distant from Ward's discussions from the angle of gender relations.

Chapter Three:

Besides interpreting the theory of female centrality from the perspectives of class struggle, feminism, and national discourse, intellectuals of the time also discussed this theory within the broader context of the debate between science and metaphysics.

For example, the "Oriental Magazine" evaluated the theory of "female centrism" as "a scientific attitude that presents notable facts from the biological world, proving that in nature, women indeed hold a central position," asserting that the male-centrism traditional thought of thousands of years will be "completely shattered from now on," and praising this theory as "a scientific new discovery beneficial to the hearts of the people and the world."

References:

[1] Yubun: "My Perspective on Women's Issues," in *Women*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (November 1927), pp. 5-6.

[2] Wang Huiwu: "How to Solve Women's Issues," in the Supplement of the Republic Daily, *Women's Review*, No. 4 (August 24, 1921), p. 1.

[3] Ye Ye: "Male-Centered and Female-Centered Theories," p. 18.

[4] Same as above, p. 19.

[5] Same as above, p. 18.

[6] Qixin: "Women-Centered Women of Xikang," in *Women's Magazine* (Beijing), Vol. 4, No. 3 (March 1943), p. 24.

[7] Same as above.

"Causing a chaotic scene" / P 255

(1) The advertisement slogans for "Female Centrism Theory" promoted later in the magazine "Students" are essentially consistent with the content in "Eastern Magazine" and fully affirm its scientific value.

(2) In addition, some intellectuals, such as Du Junhui (1904-1981), consider "Ward's words" to be scientifically based.

(3) As for why it is deemed scientific and the criteria for evaluation, the author does not elaborate but quotes Ward himself, stating: "My research, much like Copernicus's theory of heliocentrism and Darwin's theory of evolution, has excluded many criticisms and, similar to destroying the legends of that time, will soon sweep away male-centrism theory."

The hope is to convince readers to "believe him (referring to Ward)."

(4) However, the reason why female-centrism theory has been criticized in the United States since its inception is precisely because it is anti-scientific.

Here, we shall briefly understand the history of female centrism theory.

According to Ward's own account, female centrism theory was not proposed in 1903.

On April 26, 1888, the Six O'Clock Club in Washington held its fourteenth dinner at Willard's Hotel.

Because American suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906), and Mrs. J. C. Croly (Jennie June, 1829-1901) attended the event, the theme of the dinner was set as gender equality.

Ward was invited to speak first.

It was during this speech that he put forth the core ideas of female centrism theory, (5) which he later formalized into an article titled "Our Better Halves," published in the journal Forum.

(6) In this article, as with contemporary male centrists, Ward also operated under the premise of a naturalistic gender theory, drawing analogies from natural attributes to gender relations.

However, he chose aspects from the biological realm that male centrists had not addressed, to substantiate his claim.

Ward argues that the biological realm began with asexual reproduction, where females could reproduce independently, without male participation.

He uses examples from cannabis, geraniums, spiders, bees, butterflies, eagles, crustaceans, and mollusks to illustrate that, whether in the plant or lower animal kingdoms, females are often physically more robust than males, occupying a dominant position; males merely contribute to fertilization and, after copulation, either die or remain under female dominance and selection.

References:

[1] Book advertisement, 'Eastern Magazine', Volume 19, Issues 9, 10, 11 (1922).

[2] 'Book and Newspaper Introduction: The Gynocentric Perspective', 'Student', Volume 9, Issue 6 (June 1922), p. 129.

[3] Junhui: 'The Gynocentric View in Biology', 'Linglong', Volume 5, Issue 10 (March 1935), p. 593.

[4] Same as above.

[5] Ward, Pure Sociology, p. 297.

[6] <https://gynocentrism.com/2015/05/15/our-better-halves-1888/> (Accessed: November 30, 2016), original text found in Lester F. Ward, 'Our Better Halves,' Forum 6 (November 1888), pp. 266-275.

The conditions in early human society were also similar to those in the biological world.

Women, holding the power of elimination, remained in a dominant position, maintaining the stability of the race.

Men, on the other hand, were in a subordinate position, their role being to promote the species change.

Ward thus concluded that for humanity to progress and for the species to improve, the circumstances of women must be improved.

Furthermore, from Ward's earlier published works, we can also find shadows of the female-centrism theory.

In 1892, Ward published "The Psychic Factors in Civilization."

In this book, he emphasized the primary identity and status of women, stressing that female superiority is a common phenomenon in the animal kingdom, reiterating that women can perpetuate the race on their own, only needing assistance from men to enhance the vitality of their offspring; as humans began to develop aesthetic functions, women tended to favor tall, strong, and handsome men, which, in turn, encouraged men to further develop in the competition to win women's affection.

(1) From this, we can understand the foundational context of Ward's thought.

That is to say, key terms and concepts of the female-centrism theory, such as female superiority, female elimination, and male elimination, as well as the theoretical framework, had already taken shape.

The later Chapter 14 of "Pure Sociology" further explored, argued, and expanded upon this foundation in more detail.

When Ward published "Our Better Half" in 1888, there were few followers of the female-centrism theory.

Ward himself mentioned Charles V. Riley (1843-1895).

(2) Additionally, Grant Allen (1848-1899) had written about the differences in intelligence between men and women in discussions with Ward.

(3) Among those influenced most deeply by Ward was the American feminist pioneer Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935).

As a devotee of Ward, Gilman borrowed many of his intellectual resources, such as the female-centrism theory, male-centrism theory, and gender elimination.

Her work "The Man-Made World: Or, Our Androcentric Culture" directly used Ward's terminology.

(4) In Gilman's view, the female-centrism theory was a significant contribution by Ward to women's issues and was the

greatest theory after Darwinism.

(5) For this reason, she tirelessly promoted and advocated Ward's theories for over a decade from the late 19th to early 20th century.

In 1897, Gilman published the famous book "Women and Economics," which introduced Ward's ideas expressed in "Dynamic Sociology" and "Our Better Half."

References:

(1) Lester F. Ward, *The Psychic Factors of Civilization* (Boston: Ginn, 1893), pp. 87-88.

[2] Ward, *Pure Sociology*, p. 297.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 296.

[4] Charlotte Gilman, *The Man-Made World* (New York: Humanity Books, 2001).

[5] Charlotte Gilman, *The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman: An Autobiography* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1935), p. 187.

"Creating a chaotic and polluted environment" - P257

(1) After the publication of 'Women and Economics', it had a wide-ranging influence in various countries in Europe and America, not only being reprinted multiple times but also translated into various languages. Ward's theory also became widely disseminated.

In 1904, Gilman reintroduced the female centrism theory at the International Women's Conference in Berlin.

(2) However, with the development of biology, the biological foundations on which the female-centric theory relied were proven to be false.

As mentioned previously, Ward believed that in both the plant and animal kingdoms, females dominate in matters of sexual relationships and biological inheritance.

However subsequently, biologists pointed out that Ward's theory lacked factual basis; the examples he cited of males dwelling within females and dying after fulfilling their fertilization duties simply do not exist.

(3) As for his use of matriarchy to demonstrate that early human society was similarly dominated by females as the biological world, this point is also subject to doubt.

(4) In other words, the female-centric theory, from premise to conclusion, contradicted contemporary research in biology and anthropology.

Yet, 15 years later, Ward reiterated this theory in 'Pure Sociology', and it was inevitably met with criticism.

During that time, an organized campaign against the female-centric theory also occurred.

Stanley Hall (G. Stanley Hall, 1844-1924), Edmund Wilson (Edmund B. Wilson, 1856-1939), and Franklin Giddings (Franklin Giddings, 1855-1931), who held opposing academic views to Ward, were invited by the editor of 'The Independent', Henry Holt (Henry Holt, 1840-1926), to write critical articles against Ward.

Holt initially hoped to publish these articles and sought a response from Ward.

Ward rejected this request, accusing Holt's approach of violating professional ethics, yet the articles by Hall and Wilson were eventually published.

(5) Aside from these scholars who fundamentally disagreed with Ward's theories, Gilman also expressed her views on some of Ward's theories.

For a long time, Gilman had hoped for Ward's acknowledgment, but when others criticized her work as merely an interpretation of Ward's theories, she insisted on the originality of her theory, particularly regarding parts similar to Ward's claims.

(6) On key issues such as how a female-centric society comes to an end, how a male-centric society forms, and how the subordinate status of women is abolished, Gilman presented views different from Ward's; (7) she even deemed his assertion that a female-centric society would soon be supplanted by a male-centric one as utterly ridiculous, (1st reference for page 258) while maintaining silence on his claims that interbreeding between inferior and superior races could enhance the species quality.

References:

[1] Gilman, *The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman: An Autobiography*, p. 259.

(2) Judith A. Allen, *The Feminism of Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Sexualities, Histories, Progressivism*, p. 93.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Lester F. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology* (New York: Appleton, 1883), vol. 1, p. 657.

(5) Lester F. Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos* (New York: Putnam's, 1918), vol. 6, pp. 223-224.

[6] Gilman, *The Man-Made World*, p. 38.

[7] Charlotte Gilman, *Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution* (San Francisco: Harper Torchbooks, 1966), pp. 125, 127.

(2) Even Gilman, as an admirer of Ward, does not agree with many of his significant viewpoints, making the failure of feminist theory in American academia clearly evident.

Chinese intellectuals recognized from the outset that the theory lacked scientific basis, primarily including Gu Shouchang (1904-2002) and Zhou Jianren (1888-1984).

In 1923, while studying at the Jiangsu Provincial Third Normal School, Gu Shou Chang published a series of articles in the supplementary publication "Xuehui" of the "Guofeng Daily," theoretically critiquing feminist theory.

(3) He cited various counter-examples from the biological realm, systematically arguing against the fallacies of feminist theory and rebutting Ward's claims.

First, in response to Ward's assertion that initial reproduction in the biological world does not require the participation of males, Gu pointed out that this applies only to low-level organisms engaged in asexual reproduction.

If we were to label it as female-centric, it could only apply to lower organisms that are female-centric.

For the purpose of racial evolution, reproduction must involve fertilization, thus males play an important role in this process. He further refuted Ward's claim that male parasitism finishes fertilization and then dies using the example of the female

toad, arguing that the latter's death post-fertilization illustrates that Ward's conclusions are overly generalized.

In the biological sphere, the notion of female-centricity is untenable, and this holds true for the plant kingdom as well.

The fact that stamens die after pollination and other occurrences that Ward used to show male dependence on females, existing solely for fertilization, appear to Gu as merely natural arrangements, a "natural setting" required for reproduction.

Lastly, to prove that the feminist theory was also valid in early human societies, Ward borrowed the conclusion from Johann Jakob Bachofen (1815-1887) that early human society was matriarchal.

In contrast, Gu Shou Chang cited theories from Charles A. Ellwood (1873-1946) and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), who held opposing views to Bachofen, as well as field research results from Lewis H. Morgan (1818-1881), to illustrate that early humanity was an era of gender equality.

The existence of a matriarchal society is denied, thereby rendering the feminist theory unsustainable.

Besides Gu Shouchang, Zhou Jianren also theoretically critiqued Ward's doctrine as lacking scientific support, pointing out that viewing primitive uni-cellular organisms capable of asexual reproduction as female cells is inappropriate.

The belief that females are larger than males or that males parasitize females cannot serve as a basis for deriving feminist theory, refuting the notion of a hierarchy or inequality between the sexes and advocating for gender equality.

(4) Following Gu Shouchang and Zhou Jianren, there is also Wan Lan's article "Parthenogenesis and Feminist Centrism," which approaches the topic from a theoretical perspective.

However, the emphasis is no longer on the theory itself, but on critiquing some radical feminist movements of the time.

The author points out that parthenogenesis can only occur in lower organisms; higher organisms have yet to achieve this capability, let alone human societies.

Even if it were successful in the future, without paternal inheritance, the offspring would be severely lacking.

Therefore, those who use parthenogenetic phenomena to validate the rationale of feminist centrism and as a scientific basis for expanding women's rights are misguided.

References:

(1) Charlotte Gilman, *Herland* (London: Women's Press, 1979), p. 55.

[2] Ward, *Pure Sociology*, pp. 358-359; Allen, *The Feminism of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, p. 100.

[3] Gu Shouchang: "Critique of Female-Centered Theory (Continued)", *Journal of Studies*, Issue 151 (27 March 1923), pp. 1-2.

[4] Gao Shan: "Review of Female-Centered Theory", *Women's Magazine*, Volume 10, Issue 3 (March 1924), pp. 444-447.

"Creating a confused and chaotic situation" - P259

(1) In summary, Gu Shouchang, Zhou Jianren, and others indeed discovered some flaws in Ward's theory.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Western scholars engaged in fierce debate over the existence of matriarchal societies. Ward, who was involved in this discussion, chose to affirm their existence but was unable to explain the objections raised by opponents such as Charles Darwin.

As for how asexual reproduction evolved into female reproduction, Ward's statements are also vague, only mentioning that it would be absurd to regard unicellular organisms capable of dividing as male reproduction, which biologists have also come to refer to as egg cells.

(2) This contradicts the later viewpoint proposed by biologists that the biological realm initially had no sexual differences.

In other words, as fields such as biology and anthropology continue to evolve, many of the theoretical premises and factual bases of Ward's doctrine have lost their persuasive power, which is fundamentally why it is no longer widely recognised in Western academic circles.

Those who still insist that "Ward's words have scientific basis" (3) suggest a lack of biological knowledge unless they are serving a specific agenda.

If it is said that Gu Shou Chang, Zhou Jian Ren and others merely critiqued the specific content of the feminist perspective, then the socialists fundamentally denied the theoretical premises of Ward's doctrine.

The feminist perspective is based on Darwin's theory (of sexual selection), which posits that the advantageous individuals within the same species are determined by the elimination of the opposite sex.

(4)Ward starts from this point, indicating that after matriarchal societies, men became aware of their significant role in reproduction, leading to a consciousness of fatherhood; they then used the advantages gained from elimination by women, in terms of physique and other aspects, to subjugate women, exercising the power of sexual selection based on male aesthetic preferences; unlike in the animal kingdom where females prefer strong and courageous males, human males use criteria such as female weakness and beauty; (5) this aesthetic preference results in competition among women, which can only lead to women becoming increasingly weak and useless, further exacerbating their suffering under male control and manipulation.

Ward's analysis of the reasons for the reversal of the status of the two sexes has many supporters in Japan. Sakai Rihiko (1863-1944) and Saze Chomitsu were strong advocates of this theory. In their discussions of the feminist perspective, they first acknowledged the significant role of sexual elimination.

(6) However, Sakai Rihiko disagreed, arguing that factors such as sexual selection, the development of male rationality, and the awakening of father consciousness are not the reasons for men attaining dominant positions.

References:

(1) Bi Wankan: "On Female Reproduction and Women-Centredness", *Journal of Health*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (January 1934), p. 58.

(2) Ward, *Pure Sociology*, p. 313.

(3) Junhui: "Biological Perspectives on Women-Centredness", p. 593.

(4) Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection of Sex* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p. 243.

[5] Ward, *Pure Sociology*, p. 363.

[6] Saketani Junjiro, Sasa Chomei: "Women as Seen by Men" (Tokyo: Tentando Shoten, 1921).

260 | Research on Translation History (2016)

As an early Japanese socialist, he proposed that "the fact that men hold economic rights is the reason for their dominance."

(1) In other words, the reason women have lost their advantageous position is that they have been deprived of economic rights. Chinese socialists, who have been influenced by scientific socialism, unanimously agree with Sakai Rihon's assertion.

When Li Da translated "The Centre of Women's Discourse," he mentioned that the current social economic foundation has been shaken, and it is a time for men and women to unite to carry out the transformation work.

(2) In other articles, Li Da also pointed out that the status of women often shifts with economic changes; the replacement of matriarchy by patriarchy has as its fundamental reason the loss of economic rights by women.

(3) Chen Du Xiu similarly believed that only by achieving socialism can the women's issue be fundamentally resolved, because socialism will ensure that everyone, including women, obtains economic independence; once women have economic independence, they will have dignity, which is what women currently cannot enjoy.

(4) This viewpoint, which explains women's tragic situation from an economic perspective, garnered support from many at the time and later appeared repeatedly in articles criticizing the discourse centred on women.

For instance, Ye Ke Ping argued that:

"to attribute the domination of women and the development of human reason to sexual elimination is overly one-sided. We know that besides natural sexual relations, there exists a social economic relationship, which is an undeniable fact."

(5) Zhou Shou Yuan also emphasised that the end of matriarchy is due to changes in the economic system.

(6) A more detailed discussion on this was presented by Feng Hefa in an article titled "Women's Liberation and the Centre of Women's Discourse," published in The Labour Weekly in 1930

The author, on one hand, highly praised Ward's theory, arguing that "it breaks all biases that consider men superior and provides a theoretical basis for women's liberation"; (7) on the other hand, he did not agree with Ward's analysis of the causes of the circumstances surrounding gender relations.

In the text, Feng Hefa repeatedly emphasises that "the sexual relationship between men and women is largely determined by property relations"; "men hold significant economic power, and women have to depend on them"; "sexual relations are

established upon economic relations.

Because men control economic power in society, women become vassals of men."

(8) Similar statements abound in the text.

This indicates that Feng HeFa does not in fact agree with Ward's assertions.

References:

[1] Sakai Toshihiko: <Preface>, "The Feminist Centre Theory" (Tokyo: Bokuminsha, 1916), p. 2.

[2] Li Da: <Translator's Preface>, p. 3.

[3] Li Heming: "Theory of Women's Liberation", p. 21.

[4] Chen Duxiu: <Women's Issues and Socialism — Speech at the Guangdong Women's Federation>, "Guangdong Qunbao" (January 31, 1921 and February 1, 1921).

[5] Ye Keping: <Research on Feminist Centre Theory (Continued)>, "Women's Resonance" Vol. 1 No. 2 (February 1932), p. 44.

[6] Zhou Shouyuan: "Special Issue on New Women (Part Eight)", Shanghai Minli Girls' Secondary School Student Autonomy Association (ed.): "New Women" First Issue (May 1935), p. 14.

[7] Feng Hefar: "Women's Liberation and Feminist Centre

Theory (Continued)", "Labour University Weekly" Vol. 4 No. 10 (1930), p. 42.

[8] Feng Hefar: "Women's Liberation and Feminist Centre Theory (Unfinished)", "Labour University Weekly" Vol. 4 No. 9 (1930), p. 13.

The reason for his opposing stance is closely related to his experiences and understanding.

In 1927, Feng Hefa enrolled in the newly established National Labour University.

(1) Although the Kuomintang authorities had strict control over the school, Feng Hefa was still exposed to Marxism during his time there and was deeply influenced by it.

(2) The book "Outline of Rural Sociology" (also known as "Research on Rural Society in China"), which he wrote in 1929, applies the principles of Marxist sociology, examining rural production relationships from the perspective of production relations and using economic status as a guideline.

It employs class analysis methods to observe various aspects of rural production relationships and investigates the relationship between rural social phenomena and urban social phenomena, studying the composition, changes, and trends of rural social phenomena from the overall social phenomena.

The author concludes that the future of the Chinese revolution relies entirely on the peasant movement.

(3) Under this ideological guidance, in "Women's Liberation and the Female-Centric Theory," he introduces readers to thinkers and their works on women's issues, such as Edward Carpenter's "Love's Coming of Age" and Meta Stem Lilienthal's "Women of the Future," all from a materialist standpoint, emphasising that economic factors are the fundamental driving force behind the development of gender relations.

Ward also discusses men's economic oppression of women in "Pure Sociology."

He points out that after the advent of a male-centric society, men recognised the economic value of women and compelled the latter to serve them.

(5) Ward's understanding can also be attributed to the influence of Gilman.

After the publication of her work "Women and Economics," Gilman gifted a copy to Ward.

Although she later expressed frustration that Ward had evidently not read her book, it was indeed from that point on that Ward began to pay attention to the role of economic factors in gender relations.

Following "Pure Sociology," he reiterates this point in works such as "Applied Sociology."

(7) In 1910, he also criticised Annie G. Porritt's article "Woman as a Metonymy" for neglecting the role of economic elements(8).

References:

(1) Feng Hefa: "The Principal of Shanghai Cheng Zhong Middle School, Cao Muguan," in the collection compiled by the Historical and Literary Data Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee: "Selections from Historical and Literary Materials (Volume 24) - Education" (Beijing: China Historical and Cultural Publishing House, 2002), p. 497.

(2) Feng Hefa: "Memories of the National Labour University," in the collection compiled by the Historical and Literary Data Committee of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference: "Selected Historical and Literary Materials from Shanghai (Volume 80) - Literary and Historical Essences" (Shanghai: Editing Office for Historical and Literary Materials of the Shanghai Municipal CPPCC, 1996), p. 139.

(3) Feng Hefa: "Outline of Rural Sociology" (also known as "Research on Chinese Rural Society" (Shanghai: Liming Book-store, 1929).

(4) Here, Feng Hefa also mentions the works of another anarchist, Joseph A. Labadie (1850-1933), entitled "Looking Ahead." The author has not yet located the original text of this book, thus this note is made. Feng Hefa: "Women's Liberation

and the Centre of Female Discourse (Unfinished)," p. 15; Feng Hefa: "Women's Liberation and the Centre of Female Discourse (Continued)," pp. 39-40.

(5) Ward, *Pure Sociology*, p. 345. 6. Allen, *The Feminism of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, pp. 92-93. 7. Lester F. Ward, *Applied Sociology* (Boston: Ginn, 1906), p. 232. 8. Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos*, vol. 6, p. 356.

However, unlike Gilman, Sakai Rihiko and others, Ward believed that men's economic subjugation of women is not the fundamental reason for women's subservient position and the formation of a male-centric society, but rather a result of a male-centric culture.

(1) This is undoubtedly anti-scientific for individuals like Li Da, who believe in scientific socialism.

In 1923, Hu Shi (1891-1962) remarked on the standing of science when writing the preface for the book "Science and World view":

"Over the past thirty years, one term has achieved almost supreme status in the country; whether individuals understand it or not, whether they are conservative or progressive, no one dares to openly show disdain or mock it", that term is "science".

Whether this nearly unanimous belief across the nation has any value is another question.

At the very least, we can say that since China began promoting reform and renewal, no self-proclaimed new individuals have dared to publicly slander "science".

(2) The exceedingly lofty status of science often leads people to unconsciously use it as a tool to support or oppose certain theories and ideas.

The two starkly different attitudes of the May Fourth intellectuals towards the concept of a female-centred theory illustrate this point.

"The Oriental Magazine" views it as scientific; Gu Shou Chang and Zhou Jian Ren critique it as anti-scientific; while Li Da and other socialists, while critiquing, also prove that their theories are more scientific and reasonable.

With regard to the scientific connotation and evaluation standards each discusses, they are largely unaware of or do not accept each other's perspectives.

Section Four:

After the concept of female centrism was introduced to China, relevant discussions continued endlessly, with readers "often seeing articles about female centrism in newspapers and magazines"; (3) "The Red Leaf Weekly" even included the term female centrism in its sociology glossary.

(4) Like other Western female theories that were introduced to China during this period, female centrism was closely linked to China's women's liberation movement from the moment it was brought in.

Intellectuals engaged in lengthy debates regarding the establishment of a female-centric society.

It should first be noted that there were also theorists at the time who believed that China, and indeed the entire world, was

already a female-centric society.

In 1930, the prominent scholar Wan Ruan (originally named Li Chang Qiao, 1901-1960) pointed out in the article "National Affairs of Female Centrism" that on the one hand, significant national affairs in China were entirely managed by men, whilst on the other, "every affair is managed and manipulated by women".

References:

- [1] Gilman, *Women and Economics*, p. 127.
- [2] Hu Shi: "Preface to Science and World view", *Science and World view* (Shanghai: Yadong Library, 1923), pp. 2-3.
- [3] Wanlan: "Female Reproductive and Female Centrism", p. 53.
- [4] Kunyun: "Common Sense Dictionary", Hongye (Collected Edition) Vol. 5 (October 1931), p. 29.

"To create chaos and confusion" - P263

(1) He cited historical examples of marital alliances to commend the abilities of women in resolving ethnic disputes, claiming they surpass so-called saints and famous generals.

Furthermore, he illustrated how women, through their influence over their husbands' careers, encompassing personnel appointments, friendships, and integrity, actually determine a nation's political and economic development.

Seven years later, this perspective received a response from a commentator named Fang Tao.

The latter fundamentally denied the existence of a male-centric society, pointing out that, both historically and in contemporary contexts, and at both domestic and societal levels, women's status has consistently been superior to that of men.

(2) Specifically, on one hand, household responsibilities are primarily managed by women, and children tend to be closer to their mothers; on the other hand, although women do not participate in political affairs, this is a conscious choice made by them.

They prefer to be the behind-the-scenes manipulators, controlling the men on the political stage.

Whether it be Liu Bang (Emperor Gao zu of Han, 256 BC-195

BC), Li Long Ji (Emperor Xuan Zong of Tang, 685-762), Edward VII (1894-1972), or Herbert C. Hoover (1874-1964), they are merely puppets of women.

In Fang Tao's view, the world has always been in the hands of women, with absolutely no existence of oppression against them.

This argument, which shows a lack of respect for history and is riddled with flaws, is naturally difficult to substantiate.

At the time, there were also responses to such claims.

For instance, in response to the assertion that the extensive use of female stars in the film industry is actually centrism, around women, Chen Bo'er pointed out that this is a distorted development led by a male-centric perspective, reflecting male aesthetics.

Those women who admire female stars or aspire to become one have either subconsciously adopted the male-centric aesthetic standards, or they feel the imbalanced gender dynamics in society but, lacking the power to contest it, resorts to viewing female stars as their heroes, or believe that female stars have rightfully attained their social status.

Such a female-centric situation is, in fact, a source of shame rather than honour for women.

(3) Besides the aforementioned dissent, the majority of intellectuals at the time generally acknowledged the reality of male centrism.

However, due to differing views, the gender relationship models they constructed varied significantly.

In 1934, photographers Wu Qianli, Jin Yufan, Chen Bingde, and Chen Guoji captured a series of works titled "Art Photography from a Female-Centric-Perspective" for the magazine "Liang You".

(4) In the picture, women are no longer the "talentless" traditional ladies, but modern women pursuing new knowledge; they no longer seek male approval, but establish relationships with female peers; women exist as subjects, while men are merely their shadows.

Soon after, the artist Huang Miaozi (1913-2012) used the format of cartoons, accompanied by simple text, hoping to subvert the reality of a male-centric society, composing a rhapsody centred on women.

(5) In his works, men became "vases", observed and enjoyed by women (see Diagrams 1 and 2); men became victims of feudal rituals, unwilling to associate with women for fear of losing their virginity (see Diagram 3); society everywhere adhered to the civilising principle of "Men First" (see Diagram 4).

References

[1] Wanrong [Li Changqiao]: "National Affairs from a Female Centre", "Ten Thousand People Magazine", Vol. 1, No. 4 (July

1930), p. 21.

[2] Fang Tao: "On Female Centre Society", "Analects", No. 115 (July 1937), pp. 25-26.

[3] Chen Bo'er: "Female Centre Cinema and Male Centre Society", "Women's Life", Vol. 2, No. 2 (February 1936), pp. 59-66.

[4] Wu Qianli, Jin Yufan, Chen Wude, Chen Guoji: "Female Centre Art Photography", "Good Friend", No. 98 (November 1934), p. 5.

[5] Huang Miao zu: "Female Centre Rhapsody", "Women's Illustrated News", No. 35 (December 1935 and January 1936 combined issue), p. 48.

The work not only brings a smile to the audience but also fully highlights the difficult position of women in a male-centered society, as well as the author's aspiration to create an ideal society centered around women.



图 1

Diagram 1)

*"The weird stuff from the department of hell is like, what's up?
You gotta pick a flower: the assistant one.*

Naming the scary thing is fine, but how's it looking now?

It's all about picking the right scent, you know?"



图 2

Diagram 2)

"There's a guy sitting at the electronic desk, and there's a bright warm lamp with a clock on it."



图3

Diagram 3)

"I have indeed received it. It roughly corresponds to what I have acquired. However, I am an old-fashioned man who, under the pressure of oppression, saw my mother unwilling to let one son be in the company of another man. Instead, she engaged with women."

! So that guy is just not pulling it together.



图 4

Diagram 4)

MEN FIRST! "Proof of the style.

The order of the literary society is maintained. "

However, this extreme feminist viewpoint of 'dancing with a big knife to kill all men' (1), has received much criticism.

Even those general feminists who advocate for reclaiming all human rights from men vehemently oppose the construction of a female-centered society.

Jun Shan, in her essay 'The Theory of a Female-Centered Society and Women's Liberation,' begins by calling for cooperation and mutual respect between the sexes, rejecting the rhetoric and practices that prioritize women.

(2) She advocates that women should obtain their rightful rights and responsibilities from men, but opposes attitudes of jealousy and vengeance towards men within the movement, arguing that a female-centric-society is equally erroneous.

References:

[1] Ye Ye: 'The Theory of Male Centrism and Female-Centrism, page 19.

[2] Jun Shan: 'The Social Theory of Female-Centricity and Women's Liberation', page 1.

Page 265 - "It has created a chaotic and confusing environment".

(1) Shi Zhi Cun also opposed the centrism upon a certain sex, proposing that only when the sexes help each other and encourage each other can human beings be happy and the world will be the same; If one side deliberately oppresses the other, society will not be peaceful, and progress will be very slow.

(2) Shi Ping Mei (1902-1928) also insisted that the ideal and perfect society was jointly built by men and women; A male-centered society is certainly counterintuitive, and a woman-centered society is also imperfect.

(3) What ordinary feminists hope to strive for is only equality between men and women, not the hostility between the sexes; They believe that the extreme theories expressed by ultra-feminists will undoubtedly raise the war flag between the sexes, leading men and women to fight each other, and such struggles are not only unintentionally self-righteousness, but they are fundamentally, a great fallacy.

(4) As for socialists, because they adhere to the Marxist view of women, they naturally do not agree with the establishment of gender-centered relations between the sexes.

As early as 1919, Li Da proposed: "All morals, customs, habits,

laws, politics, and economics in society must be centric upon men and women, so that they can be regarded as true morality, true customs, real habits, true laws, real politics, and true economy. "

(5) In the translator's preface to "Female-Centrism Theory", Li Tatsuya also talked about the fact that there is no purely male society or purely female society in the world, and that society was originally organized by men and women.

(6) Xia Zun also opposes the female centric theory.

He is studying the text with female radicals, pointing out that there are 28 characters that refer to the shortcomings of human nature, all of which are composed of the word "female"; It seems that "all the sins in the world are arranged by women"; "This may be a kind of funny evidence of the 'women-centric theory'!"

(7) The author here uses the fact that women seem to monopolize the shortcomings of human nature to satirize the absurdity of the female centric theory.

Mao Dun agrees with Ward's description of the tragic situation of women in history, but denies the latter's "female superiority".

He adheres to the steady proposition of "advocating women's liberation while criticizing the rhetoric and actions of the women's liberation movement with twelve ideas of prudence and thoughtfulness" (8), criticizing those who insist on extreme freedom and extreme liberation from the idea and practice of seeking biological evidence to show that women are naturally

superior to men, and that women have been oppressed by men since the beginning of human history.

(9) On the premise of neither despising women's ability nor intentionally elevating, Mao Dun advocated "this person." The power of women, like men, to become dignified people, standing side by side in society, regardless of you and me", (1st Reference for page 265) this, pursues equality between men and women.

References:

[1] Jun Shan: "The Social Theory Centered on Women and Women's Liberation", p. 1.

[2] Ye Ye: "Male-Centered and Female-Centered Theories", p. 18.

[3] Shi Pingmei: "The Second Letter to Sisters Nationwide", in "The Complete Works of Shi Pingmei" (Beijing: New World Publishing House, 2012), p. 105.

[4] Lu Yin: "Issues of the Women's Movement in China", "Mind Magazine", Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1924).

[5] Li Heming: "The Theory of Women's Liberation", p. 19.

[6] Li Da: (Translator's Preface), p. 2.

[7] Man Zun: "The Female Status Reflected in Chinese Characters", p. 1.

[8] Reporter: "The Future Direction of This Magazine", p. 14.

[9] Yan Bing: "Women in History", p. 70.

However, regardless of how the above proponents advocate for women or oppose female centrism, the female centrism/ism they describe is far from the theories discussed by Ward.

Here, we can first roughly understand Ward's attention to and research on women's issues.

As early as 1871, while he was pursuing his master's degree at George Washington University, he mentioned that the status of women in civilization was one of the issues he concerned himself with and discussed repeatedly.

(2) His early discourse mainly revolved around the issue of prostitution.

In 1870, Ward published an article titled "The Social Evil," in which he criticized the church's regulations that made it impossible to dissolve marriages, believing that this led to the development of prostitution and placed women in a slave-like position.

(3) More than a decade later, in 1881, Ward no longer blamed the issue of prostitution on the church but condemned male sexual selection; he pointed out that once men seized the power of sexual selection from women, their relentless and indiscriminate sexual desires conflicted with women's sexual cycles, naturally leading to the emergence of the prostitution industry.

(4) In 1883, Ward's "Dynamic Sociology" was published.

This book opened up American sociological research and established Ward's reputation in academia while further refining his thoughts on women's issues.

In the book, Ward continued to explore the issue of prostitution, arguing that men exchange sexual favors from women by satisfying their other desires, such as material desires.

(5) Moreover, Ward incorporated women's submissive positions into his analysis of social organization and evolution, pointing out that women, having lost the initiative in sexual selection, gradually descended into slaves and sexual objects for men, unable to enjoy equal rights with men and even completely deprived of civil rights, educational rights, voting rights, etc.; this division of labor and resources by gender contributed to women's dependence on men, and thus women's decline or degradation was inevitable, leading to polygamy, marriage, prostitution, and so on.

(6) Ward clearly called for gender equality and opposed gender division of labor, thereby becoming one of the few feminist theorists of his time.

In his book "Pure Sociology," Ward, based on some of the research findings in biology, anthropology, sociology, and other fields at that time, described, analyzed, and hypothesized the changes in gender relations in the biological and human social world and their causes.

Although his research methods and conclusions may have flaws, it cannot be denied that he was discussing the already occurred history of gender relations.

Despite being a feminist theorist, Ward clearly opposed the construction of a society centered around women.

References

[1] Pei Wei [Mao Dun]: "The Liberated Women and the Liberation of Women", "Women's Magazine", vol. 5, no. 11 (November 1919), pp. 17-22.

[2] Emily Palmer Cape, Lester F. Ward: A Personal Sketch (New York: Putnam's, 1922), pp. 28-30.

[3] Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos*, vol. 1, pp. 238-241.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 75-76.

[5] Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, pp. 608-614.

(6) *Ibid.*, pp. 607-608, 650.

In the conclusion of "The Female Centrism Theory," Ward expresses his hope for future gender relations, envisioning a society centered around both men and women, where each party is autonomous.

(1) However, Chinese intellectuals, whether in favor of or against establishing a women centric society, have clearly misinterpreted Ward's original intention.

The occurrence of such misinterpretations is partly related to Sakai Rihiko's translation.

As previously mentioned, "The Women Centric Theory" is derived from Chapter 14 of Ward's "Pure Sociology," originally titled "The Phylogenetic Forces," and along with Chapter 13 "The Ontogenetic Forces" and Chapter 15 "The SocioGenetic Forces," constitutes the social development dynamics that Ward discusses (2).

Although Ward indeed mentioned the possibility of expanding this chapter into a monograph, (3) Sakai Rihiko's decision to extract this segment into a separate book without any supplementary explanations regarding its relation to the preceding and subsequent chapters, or the overall theme of the text, risks detaching the women-centered theory from the sociological framework that Ward constructed.

"Pure Sociology" examines the various phenomena arising from the balance and imbalance of social forces, analyzing their origins and developments, but it does not provide corresponding solutions.

Understanding the women-centric theory within this context can help reduce mis-interpretation.

Sakai Rihiko himself certainly understood that the theory describes "specifically the transition of female dominance in human society to male dominance, detailing the pathway and causes of this change," (4) which relates to the historical shifts and causes of gender relations in human society.

However, he lacks an overall description of the main idea of "Pure Sociology," and the position of the female centrism theory within Ward's discourse, as he directly titled the work following the female centric theory, leading to a potential misinterpretation by readers who have not delved deeper into the content and have limited sociological knowledge.

Li Da and Xia Mian Zun also adopted Sakai Rihiko's approach when translating from Japanese, providing no further elaboration.

Of course, not all intellectuals from the May Fourth Movement failed to grasp the essence of the "Female Centrism Theory."

Ye Ke Ping informed readers that although Ward proposed the female centrism theory, he did not advocate for a return to a society centered upon women.

(5) The "Women's Magazine (Shanghai)" acknowledged that while the theory "has its biases," it can "make the general public aware of the errors of old concepts, thus understanding the historical evolution of society and the changes in gender relations."

References

[1] Ward, Pure Sociology, p. 373.

[2] The terms "the driving force of species evolution" and "the driving force of individual development" are borrowed from Peng Xiaoyan's translation; for details, refer to Peng Xiaoyan: "In Pursuit of Beauty — Zhang Jingsheng's "New Female Centric" Theory and Darwin's "Sexual Selection" Theory", p. 67.

[3] Ward, Pure Sociology, p. 290.

[4] Sakai Toshihiko: "Preface", p. 2.[5] Ye Keping: "Research on the Female Centric Theory (Continued)", p. 43.

(1) Translator Li DaYe acknowledges that the theory describes the "process of social evolution" and the "changes in gender relations."

(2) However, even with clarification, the misunderstandings of contemporary individuals regarding the female-centrism thesis are still difficult to rectify.

After this, there were still arguments directly claiming that Ward proposed that "biological evolution relies entirely on women, and the future existence of humanity with significant progress solely depends on whether social power is centered on women," (3) and "if social power is not shifted from men to women, then there is no hope for significant progress in humanity" (4), among other assertions.

Conclusion:

From the text itself, it appears that the female-centered thesis has undergone no substantial rewriting from Ward to Sakai Rihon, then to Xia Mianzun and Li Da; however, the authors/translators have different interpretations, evaluations, and conceptualizations of future gender relations due to their specific historical contexts, motivations for text production/reproduction, individual positions and attitudes, as well as the real problems they aim to address.

Once it entered the realm of reception, this theory was further

deconstructed and reorganized by readers with differing ideologies.

Similar to other Western feminist theories that were introduced to China during the May Fourth Movement, such as Ellen Key's theory of maternal protection, August Bebel's scientific socialism view of women, and John Stuart Mill's feminist doctrine, the content of the female-centrism thesis that could be broadly accepted at that time was quite limited, primarily restricted to the consensus that "women are in a subservient position" already established in the intellectual community.

The vast majority of other views, such as the superiority of females in the biological realm, the dominance of women in matriarchal societies, and the awakening of paternal consciousness as the fundamental reasons for the formation of a male-centered society, became battlegrounds for various thoughts, theories, and schools of thought.

In 1926, Zhang JingSheng (1888-1970), inspired by the female-centrism thesis, proposed "New Female-Centric-Feminism."

(5) Its main argument is: Men inherently lack in aspects of love, aesthetics, and spirit of sacrifice, thus asserting that future evolved societies should be centered around women; women need to strive to cultivate themselves as lovers, beauties, and individuals with a spirit of sacrifice, so that influenced by them,

men will also inevitably become lovers, great figures, and heroes; women can manipulate men through sexuality.

After this theory was proposed, it quickly received some responses from intellectuals.

The previously mentioned proponents who insist that we are already in a female-centric society believe that the reason women can control men resides, on one hand, in their possessing "female charm," such as beauty, allure, gentleness, fragility, etc., (1st reference on next page of 269) and, on the other, in men's desire for sex.

References:

[1] "Introduction to the New Book: Women's Centrality Theory", *Women's Magazine* (Shanghai), Vol. 8, Issue 7 (July 1922), p. 23.

[2] Li Da: "Translator's Preface", p. 2.

[3] Kang Xuanyi: "The New Life View Modern Women Should Have", *Oriental Magazine*, Vol. 32, No. 7 (April 1935), p. 223.

[4] Wang Shijie: "Trends of the Newly Adopted Constitution - Reconstruction of the Representative System", *Oriental Magazine*, Vol. 19, No. 22 (November 1922), p. 16.

[5] Zhang Jingsheng: "Love and Aesthetic Taste", *Jingbao Supplement*, September 11, 1925, p. 266.

[2] Consistent with the female-centric perspective, the 'New Female Centrism' still relies on Darwin's theory of sexual selection as its theoretical premise, [3] and also acknowledges the current inferior status of women.

The differences in the latter's assertion that women should fully utilize their feminine traits to influence and manipulate men, thereby establishing a genuinely female centric society.

References

[1] Wan Rong: 'The National Matter of Female Centricity', p. 21.

[2] Fang Tao: 'Discussion on a Female Centric Society', p. 26.

[3] For related studies, refer to Peng Xiaoyan: 'Beauty as Supremacy—Zhang Jingsheng's Theory of New Female Centrism and Darwin's Sexual Selection', pp. 57-77.

Translated by: SpiritHeart

Translators Foreword:

This translated document, should perhaps be aptly named:

"The historical origins of Feminisms roots into China, upon the coat-tail of Marxism, whilst fuelled by Chivalric-Gynocentrism"

Within this translated piece, the audience will come across perhaps most of all, a sense of deja vous, regarding the familiarity with what happened back then in early 20th Century China Versus what has been happening across the West in terms of gender politics, since the 1960s.

As part of ones journey, one might also come to recognise that, the entire periods cultural - academic and intellectual battles over this topic, like today, had it's fair share of heroes and heroines, Villians and Villainesses too, from amongst the aisles of those who ever saw that "women were eternal victims of male oppressors" and supported what was then 1st Wave feminism in China (yet in the same breath, opposed the radical Socialism/Marxist changes to society advocated by some of their followers & peers).

All the way (with degrees of gray in between) to those who saw, what this author would argue as the genuine, rational truth, which was that for most human history, working menfolk (outside the ranks of the aristocratic elites), like the womenfolk, typically lived lives dominated by daily drudgery and subsistence living, something that was seen by the historical equivalents (unicorn feminists) of the more, contemporary likes

of genuine egalitarians like Karen De Crow.

These genuine egalitarians, recognised that, without regular menfolk being granted the same valuing by society for their welfare - civil rights and fair access to opportunities, that the womens liberationists were demanding for women, civilisation would suffer, as these few enlightened souls saw that society was built and maintained by both men and womens cooperation, since the beginning of time, via both sides ongoing agreement.

The original documents researcher/academic author, as you will observe through his many written personal excerpts, is evidently some form of believer in the ideology of

"men have always oppressed women and this was absolutely true"

(yet provides little to no evidence for his justifications aside from it seems, his subscription to Lester Wards and likeminded sycophants who championed this romantic-ideology (with them implicitly, as womens heroic rescuers), sharing perhaps similar stances as some of the fathers of Capitalism in Wards day, such as John Stuart Mills (a staunch male feminist).

In closing, I hope you enjoy it as much as I have, across the past 8 months or so, taken to translate and curate it with more accurate terminology.

*Sincerely,
Spirit.*