

Discourse Study in the Postmodern Feminist International Relations

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Abstract The development of the theory of international relations has gone through several major changes, of which the most important one is the linguistic turn, and the struggle for and construction of discourse power is an important feature or proposition in the postmodern feminist theory. Language is no longer just the meaning of discourse and text, but essentially reflects a power transfer, discourse also means power, and language bears the carrier of power. Whoever has mastered the right to “speak” has the right to construct the behavior pattern. Postmodern feminist international relations theory is based on deconstruction, existentialism, anti-essentialism and anti-universalism. It advocates individual differences, marginal women’s demands and the mobility of subjectivity, which all reflect the diversity and flexibility of international political development. In order to fully understand the complete picture of international relations, we have retrieved the gender in the international community. This exploration can not only make us understand the important position of discourse in the postmodern feminist international relations theory more clearly, but also help scholars find a feasible path for the construction of feminist international relations theory.

Keywords: Postmodern, Feminism, International relations, Discourse power.

Introduction

Feminist movements have experienced many waves, especially the second movement in the 1960s. This time, they adjusted its focus to pay more attention to the differences between the sexes and the inequality in fact. Because its theoretical basis is weak and its persuasion is poor, it more reflects the demands of the white middle-class women in the West, which as a result has not formed much influence in the world. However, this has not obliterated the development of feminism. On the contrary, the emergence of postmodernism has provided it with a brand-new perspective of thinking. Postmodernism advocates differences and pluralism and opposes the inherent binary opposition, absolute truth and conventional knowledge. This has many overlaps with the ideas advocated by the feminist movement.

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On this basis, feminism and postmodernism have gradually been integrated and applied in International Relations to form the postmodern feminist international theory. After that, its perspective of attention has been extended to women in the third world, and women of different classes, nationalities, races and colors have become the main actors. In the past, International Relations focused on “high politics” such as state, war, peace and military. However, any international political research that ignores gender is not whole and complete. With the rise of feminist international relations theories, social gender has entered this field and began to pay attention to the influence and construction of female roles in the International Relations.

The development of the theory in international relations has seen several major changes, linguistic turn is one of the most important, and the struggle for and construction of discourse power is an important point in the postmodern feminist theory. At this time, language not only refers to the meaning of discourse and text, but essentially reflects a power transfer, discourse is power, and language takes the carrier of power. By analyzing the discourse view in postmodern feminist international relations, we can not only understand more clearly the importance of discourse in postmodern feminist international relations theory, but also open up a path for the further development of feminist international relations theory.

1. The Development of the Postmodern Feminist International Relations

There are many factions in feminist theory, which have not yet formed a complete and unified system. They also have their own views and claims on various issues in International Relations. According to different classification standards, it can be divided into different categories. For example, according to the understanding of equality and difference, it can be divided into universalist feminism, separatist feminism, essentialist feminism and particularism feminism.¹ According to the difference of political orientation, it can be broken into liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, psychoanalytic feminism and radical feminism.² At the same time, some scholars think that it can be separated into liberal feminism, radical feminism, postmodern feminism and new feminism according to political standpoint.³ No matter whether or not the postmodern feminist international relations faction has been included in many classifications, the post-modern features of it have emerged since its development, that is, criticizing the liberal feminist international relations and the radical feminist international relations, opposing the inherent understanding of the femininity and recognizing the diversity and difference of women's identities.

¹ Lynda Stone ed (1994), *The Education Feminism Reader*, Routledge, 1994, p.6.

² 周绍雪 (2010) 《女性主义国际关系理论研究》，九州出版社

³ 胡传荣 (2010) 《女性主义与国际关系》，世界知识出版社。

1.1 Philosophical Basis of the postmodern Feminist International Relations Theory

The development of postmodern feminist international relations theory coincides with various philosophical backgrounds, especially its linguistic turn embodies some philosophical logic. Exploring the philosophical basis behind it will help us to deeply analyze the development context of the theory. To a large extent, the philosophical connotation of postmodern feminist international relations theory should be excavated from the philosophical origins of postmodernism and then applied to feminist international relations theory. Deconstruction, existentialism, anti-essentialism and anti-universalism have laid the development direction and keynote of postmodern feminist international relations theory.

First, deconstruction of language. Jacques Derrida thinks that there is a certain asymmetry between the world described by words and the real world. The former can never truly reflect the latter. However, traditional western philosophy holds that the perfect unity of the two can be realized through three principles, namely, the principle of opposites, the principle of logical exclusiveness and the principle of priority. Its connotation is that things are the unity of opposites, such as men and women, tall and short, advantages and disadvantages, etc. These opposites are mutually exclusive, tall excludes short, yes excludes no. Not only that, one of the opposing roles is always better than the other. Derrida's deconstruction thinks this principle is incomplete, because even the superior party depends on the other, and the opposite party at a disadvantage presents a kind of negativity, negation and fluidity, so priority and purity cannot be confirmed, which violates the principle of priority and exclusiveness. The so-called western centralism and the universality of values are nothing but constructed. As the west was the first to embark on the road of industrialization and modernization in modern times, and its development level far exceeded that of non-western countries. On this basis, it gradually constructed a kind of language hegemony. Postmodern feminist international relations theory draws many ideas from this modern ideas, Derrida's and Foucault's thoughts, including discourse theory and criticism of male centralism, the binary opposition under patriarchy excluding women, that men are taken for granted as the superior part, and women's status and role being hidden, etc.⁴

For Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan, women are excluded from the symbol system, which also means that women are excluded from the possibility of any connection with culture and order. She was excluded from the system because she lacked any relationship with Phallogocentrism, she could not enjoy the male order superiority and she is quite far from the real power.⁵

Luce Irigaray tries to deconstruct patriarchy from ontology and discourse. She advocates that both traditional philosophy and contemporary philosophy ignore the

⁴ 雅克·德里达(1999),《声音与现象》,杜小真译,商务印书馆; (2001)《书写于差异》,张宁译,三联书店。

⁵ Helene Cixous (2000), *Castration or Decapitation*, in Kelly Oliver ed., *French Feminism Reader*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.

discussion of gender differences. The consequence of this neglect is that women are not only ignored in real life, but also in text analysis. Gender differences “will bring a new era of thinking, art, poetry and language: the creation of a new poetic era”.⁶ In addition, some scholars criticized and deconstructed the gender opposition under the traditional patriarchy from the perspective of women’s writing and from the perspective of language knowledge. They all advocate that women are no longer only the “other” role, and the traditional discourse makes the male characteristics and the female characteristics, which all reflected the masculinity and oppression of women.

Second, existentialism. Beauvoir is the creator of existentialist female thought. Existentialism refuses to admit that human beings have some universal nature. Individual free choice is the meaning of human life. Every living person has self-consciousness, and can construct his own value system and theory according to self-choice. He not only has freedom of choice but also takes responsibility for decisions. He constructs a sense of mission for himself and the world around him, and highlights the value and significance of his life through the pursuit and realization of goals. Postmodern feminist international relations theorists, especially Beauvoir, have drawn a lot of ideas from that. Women should exist on an equal footing with men, have the right to choose freely in the world, and play an important role in the formation of international relations. As women leaders, diplomats’ wives or general women, they are all important actors in their life times and international politics.

The oppression and discrimination suffered by modern women are not commensurate with their roles. Beauvoir’s feminist philosophy draws on the ideas of traditional philosophers and has exerted a great influence on the postmodern feminist theory of international relations. She also draws on the ideas of many scholars, including Hegel, Husserl, Marx and Engels, Freud, other psychologists, Rousseau, etc.⁷ She has borrowed Hegel’s dialectic thought, expanded the scope of opposition between self and others, and applies it to the thought of master and servant. Using Husserl’s phenomenological method, a new descriptive analysis mode has been formed. Referring to the thoughts of Marx and Engels, she uses dialectical materialism to re-understand the development direction of society and history. The Freudian school thinks that human beings are just individual creatures, and each organism has its own destiny. Beauvoir uses this logical perspective to think that human beings are concrete of consciousness and thought, life, value and construction. Rousseau believed that the experience of childhood would have an impact on individual freedom, which deeply influenced Beauvoir’s existentialist female thinking way.⁸

Third, anti-essentialism and anti-universalism. Essentialism emphasizes the decisive role of heredity or physiology. Universalism holds that nature or human nature are unchangeable and can be used as the source of all explanations. Postmodern Feminist International Relations Theory criticizes essentialism and universalism. It

⁶ Luce Irigaray (2000), *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, in Kelly Oliver ed., *French Feminism Reader*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc..

⁷ 西蒙娜·德·波伏娃 (2004), 《第二性》, 陶铁柱译, 中国书籍出版社□

⁸ 萨莉·J·肖尔茨 (2002), 《波伏娃》, 龚晓京译, 中华书局。

holds that this idea solidifies the traditional binary opposition between men and women and patriarchy, which intensifies the inequality between them. Gender is not the decisive factor, and human nature will change with the social and historical conditions. Moreover, postmodern feminism fundamentally questions the concept of sex. They pay more attention to the differences in nationality, race, country, class, etc. These differences are all based on gender identity under the background of male centralism. Essentialism and Universalism deny the change, which conflicts with the post-modern feminist view of international relations.

1.2 Perspectives of the Postmodern Feminist International Relations

On the philosophical basis of deconstruction, existentialism, anti-essentialism and anti-universalism, the postmodern feminist international relations theory has gradually clarified its main contents, which are respectively women's demands that pay attention to differences, marginal identities and subjectivity that advocates mobility.

First of all, the postmodern feminist international relations theory pays attention to the existence of differences. It opposes the traditional binary opposition and grand narrative theory and highlights the diversity of women's identities. It has multi-dimensional ideological flexibility. It is often skeptical of the traditional social gender cognition, knowledge, one-way, hierarchical, either-or understanding. It can also see the diversity behind these phenomena and adopts a flexible and changeable attitude.⁹ From the thought of the Enlightenment, all grand theories claim their universality and value neutrality, but in real life they still strictly distinguish between "public domain" and "private domain", active and passive, rational and emotional, etc. Postmodern feminist international relations theory believes this is a patriarchal mode of thinking in itself, which does not reflect diversity and difference, but rather solidifies its division. Moreover, these thoughts contain oppression on women. The so-called universal values are wrong, all abstract concepts do not show the whole picture of facts, and it deconstructs all inherent gender cultural assumptions of men and women. In addition, this difference is also reflected in the questioning of the gender concept. The traditional concept holds that gender is divided into men and women. According to the priority view of western traditional philosophy, men are naturally superior to women, who can only be subordinate. Under this logic, women's victim images are constructed step by step. However, men and women are actually "stories" that are being narrated. In the process of communication, people construct the identity of the target men or women, and then create this usual seemingly reasonable situation. In this continuous process of narration, gender is confirmed layer by layer, and of course is also restrained layer by layer.¹⁰

Secondly, it focuses on the appeals of the marginal women. This point of view extends from its emphasis on differences, which makes it necessary to pay attention to women in the Third World, ethnic minorities, marginal areas, etc. Compared with

⁹ Christine Sylvester (2002), *Feminism International Relations: An Unfinished Journey*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰ 克瑞斯汀·丝维斯特 (2003), 《女性主义与后现代国际关系》, 余潇枫等译, 杭州: 浙江人民出版社

white women or women leaders of the western middle class, they have a marginal status in international relations, and are rarely considered as a factor of interests in handling international affairs. However, postmodern feminist international relations try to deconstruct the traditional international theory and expand the international perspective to marginalized women groups, because it finds that these women also play an important role in the construction of the international system, such as prostitutes in brothels in colonial military bases, women workers in large plantations, third world women service workers working in developed countries, women who have taken refuge in other countries due to wars in their own countries, etc.¹¹ Even so, women from different regions, countries, societies and groups have formed unique experiences and patterns in the long-term struggle.¹²

Finally, the mobility of the subjectivity also makes a big difference. This concept was introduced into international relations by Christine Sylvester. Its main meaning is the identity and role of the subject are in a state of constant change. When the external environment such as society, politics, economy and culture changes, the identity of the subject will change accordingly. No subject can stick to a specific field, which reflects the richness of the subject and reflects the fragmentation of the identity too.¹³ The post-modern feminist theory of international relations has fully absorbed this view. It breaks the traditional patriarchal concept and holds that women have the same subjectivity in international affairs. It also eliminates the boundaries between the public and private fields. Women can not only play a role in the family but also have an impact in the international world. There is no difference in nature between the two fields, but only in the fields in which they play their roles. Social gender is no longer a sign to judge women. Diversity of identity will be the theme of the construction of a new international system. Postmodernism advocates a fragmented identity theory, which is mainly based on the fact that any ontology will exclude other than itself. This political theory provides a new analytical thinking for the development of diverse identities. The so-called universal identity politics cannot completely cover the infinite variety of human real identity types, which means that people cannot fully understand the diversity of reality.¹⁴

2. Linguistic Turn in International Relations and the Postmodern Feminist Theory

For a long time, realism has been in the dominant position in the theoretical research of international relations. It was not until the late 1980s that feminist theory of international relations developed as an analytical discipline in the United States, Britain, Australia and other regions. Feminist international relations theory takes the core categories of rational state, power, interests, security and so on as the breakthrough point, and makes a general criticism on the mainstream international relations theory. Its core concept,

¹¹ Cynthia Enloe (2014) *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* University of California Press.

¹² 佟新 (2005) *社会性别研究导论——两性不平等的社会机制分析* □, 北京大学出版社 □

¹³ 克瑞斯汀·丝维斯特 (2003), *女性主义与后现代国际关系*, 余潇枫等译, 杭州: 浙江人民出版社 □

¹⁴ 米兰达·弗里克、詹妮弗·霍恩斯比编 (2010), *《女性主义哲学指南* □, 肖巍、宋建丽、马晓燕译, 北京大学出版社 □

social gender, as an analytical method, began to permeate into various disciplines.

In 1972, Berenice Caroll published an article “Peace Research: the cult of Power” in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. This is the first feminist article in the mainstream international relations journal, which reveals that in today’s international relations research, attention is focused on the interests of the upper class, power is understood as control and rule, women’s daily concerns are ignored, and power is required to be understood as ability.¹⁵ Then Jean Bethke Elshtain published “Public man, private woman: women in social and political thought” as the first feminist theoretical work in international relations. The book points out that the tradition of looking at the world with opposing eyes in western culture makes politics based on opposition to family life, and the marginalization of the private sphere makes women suffer from various unfair treatments.¹⁶ Elshtain’s another book, *Women and War*, believed that men and women were respectively portrayed as warriors fighting for justice and beautiful hearts far from the battlefield in 1987. She focused on the impact of international relations research and practice on the social gender concept in this field. But it lacks a detailed analysis of the role of social gender concept in the formation of the knowledge system.¹⁷

Hanna Pitkin’s *Fortune Is A Woman: Gender and Politics in The Thought of Niccolo Machiavelli* was published and firstly systematically placed gender among the political thought.¹⁸ Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell’s book “Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics” mapped the structure of gender in the present and past and made a wide-ranging analysis of feminist politics.¹⁹ In the middle and late 1990s, feminist international relations gradually developed in China. Then Shi Bin published “A Feminist Interpretation of International Relations: A Review of Gender in International Relations” in *American Studies*, which can be regarded as a sign that Chinese scholars of international relations have begun to pay attention to this field.²⁰ Hu Chuanrong’s “Reflections on the Position of Women in International Relations in *International Watch*”, was the beginning of Chinese scholars’ attempt to combine feminism with international relations.²¹ In 1998, Wang Yizhou’s *Western International Politics: History and Theory*, comprehensively introduced the research situation of feminist international relations and was of groundbreaking significance to the evaluation of western feminist international relations theory.²²

¹⁵ Berenice A. Caroll (1972), “Peace Research, The Cult of Power”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.16, No.4, pp.585-616.

¹⁶ Jean Bethke Elshtain (1993), *Public man, private woman: women in social and political thought*, second edition, Princeton University Press.

¹⁷ Jean Bethke Elshtain (1995), *Women and War*, the University of Chicago Press.

¹⁸ Hanna Fenichel Pitkin (1999), *Fortune Is A Woman: Gender and Politics in The Thought of Niccolo Machiavelli*, the University of Chicago Press.

¹⁹ R.W. Connell (1987), *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*, Stanford University Press.

²⁰ 石斌(1996), 《对国际关系的一种女性主义诠释—评〈国际关系中的社会性别〉》, 《美国研究》, 1996年第4期。

²¹ 胡传荣(1997), 《关于妇女在国际关系中的位置的思考》, 《国际观察》, (1997)年第2期第53-56页。

²² 王逸舟(2007), 《西方国际政治学: 历史与理论》, 中国社会科学出版社。

Li Yingtao's *International Politics from a Gender Perspective* was published by Shanghai People's Publishing House, which is the first monograph on feminist international relations published in China. Firstly, the author introduces "social gender" as a research method and western feminist international political theory, analyzes and discusses the characteristics of women and men in international political theory and reality, Chinese and Chinese women in the anti-aggression struggle and the practical problems of the United Nations in improving the status of women.²³ In 2006, "Feminist International Relations", edited by Li, was published as one of the leading textbooks in international relations. It was the first textbook on feminist international relations in Chinese academia. This book introduces the beginning, main schools and development trends of feminism in international relations, and analyzes the issues of war and peace, rights and security, and environmental security from a gender perspective. It shows the role of women as actors in international relations, international organizations and international women's movements, in the development of the country and society, and in the important position of women among cultural and ethnic relations. The textbook also analyzes the development of feminist international relations in China and the development of contemporary Chinese diplomacy from a gender perspective.²⁴ In 2010, Hu Chuanrong published *Feminism and International Relations*. On the basis of sorting out the core concepts, ontology, epistemology of the feminist school of international relations and the relationship between the school and mainstream theories, she examined the interaction between the construction of the knowledge system of international relations and the social gender concepts embodied in it.²⁵

Although there have been a series of works on feminism, it is still in its infancy in international political analysis, and the amount and depth of literature in this area are not comparable to other more mature branches. The balance between autonomy and integration should be sought. However, it is still of far-reaching significance to incorporate feminist factors into international relations. It provides a new theoretical text and identity politics, challenges the traditional view of the state and reconsiders the concept of power. It is of great significance, but the way forward for feminism is very difficult. Through the exploration of Chinese and western scholars, we have a clearer understanding of the development of feminist international relations, however, we still need to further explore the logical mechanism behind the postmodern feminist theory of international relations.

Michel Foucault thinks that knowledge is a kind of discourse system. At this time, the discourse goes beyond its original meaning and includes a series of time. These events are a kind of discourse expressed by some specific actors on specific issues under specific conditions and cultural environment, which embodies a specific purpose and adopts specific ways or means. It can be seen that knowledge embodies obvious historicity, knowledge is formed through discourse practice, and discourse practice acts as a form or carrier of knowledge dissemination.²⁶ In international relations, a

²³ 李英桃 (2003), 《社会性别视角下的国际政治》, 上海人民出版社

²⁴ 李英桃 (2006), 《女性主义国际关系学》, 浙江人民出版社

²⁵ 胡传荣 (2010), 《女性主义与国际关系》, 世界知识出版社。

²⁶ 米歇尔·福柯 (2003), 《规训与惩罚》, 刘北成 杨远婴译, 三联书店, 2003 年版。[法] 米歇

large part of the interaction between international actors is realized through language, and for many people, their knowledge and understanding of international affairs are also expressed through language and symbols, such as a large number of treaties, negotiations, agreements, etc. In addition, to a certain extent, international relations are also constructed through language. Post-modern feminist international relations also coincide with this proposition. Discourse embodies a kind of power. There is a significance at this level. First, it attempts to deconstruct the inherent discourse system and power mode. Second, it constructs the discourse logic of post-modern feminism. However, no matter what kind of proposition, discourse is the object, carrier and tool. Therefore, analyzing the linguistic turn in international relations is of great significance for us to have a deep understanding of post-modern feminist international relations.

Some scholars believe that international relations have undergone three academic turns, one is scientific turn, based on logical positivism philosophy. The second is sociological turn, critical philosophy and sociology as means. And the third is linguistic turn which is based on the study of philosophy of language. These three academic turns have resulted in three different types of international relations theories, namely, international relations theories focusing on “solving practical problems”, theories concerning norms and ethics, and international relations theories on meaning and discourse.²⁷The linguistic turn of international relations explores how language describes the actors and interaction modes in international relations and how international relations construct discourse. It adopts deconstruction method to reject all the fixed and unchangeable meanings of structuralism and holds that texts have different meanings and directions in different contexts. Therefore, Derrida advocates that different meanings of symbols should be deconstructed from texts.²⁸

Post-modernist Foucault, Derrida and Bourdieu all believe that there is a certain relationship between symbols and power. Language symbols are not generated naturally, but constructed in a certain social environment. From this, we can see that the constructed symbol language has a kind of power. The constructors consciously or unconsciously interspersed its subjective color in the process of symbol construction, with a certain value judgment. Compared with the actors who only accept and use symbols, the former has an exclusive advantage. In international relations, political discourse includes not only languages directly related to political issues, but also indirectly related to political events, which are scattered in news, newspapers and the Internet.²⁹

We can also find some deviation between the real reality and the “reality” described. The latter is a phenomenon after screening and judgment. After language processing or tailoring, the “reality” discourse constructed is full of normative factors.³⁰The inspiration

尔·福柯,《知识考古学》,谢强 马月译,三联书店。

²⁷ 刘永涛(2007),“理解含义:理论、话语和国际关系”,《外交评论》,2007年4月,第 95 期。

²⁸ Jacques Derrida (1998), *Of Grammatology*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

²⁹ Christ'l De Landtsheer (1998). *Politically Speaking : A Worldwide Examination of Language Used in the Public Sphere*[C], Westpoint: Praeger.

³⁰ 袁正清(2006),《交往新闻给理论与国际政治研究——以德国国际关系研究为中心的一项考察》[J],世界政治与经济

from the constructed language symbols is that when analyzing international events, we need to find out the main body, the way, the target and the purpose of narration. At the same time, the research perspective of post-modern feminist international relations theory, has gradually shifted from the material and existence of social system, system, etc. to the discussion of text, culture and discourse. The mainstream international relations theory reflects a kind of regulatory color when describing gender, claiming that men are superior to women, and women are excluded from the political, military and other public fields, with strong patriarchal logic. However, the postmodern feminist international relations theory focuses its attention on the existing discourse system, deconstructs and criticizes it, and deeply recognizes that whoever has mastered the right to “speak” has the right to construct the behavior pattern.

Therefore, after being influenced by the thoughts of postmodern philosophers, postmodern feminism realizes that it is necessary to expose and subvert the inherent patriarchal discourse mode, to construct a discourse system belonging to women themselves, and to show the real situation and ideology of women. In response, many postmodern feminist international relations theorists have made arduous explorations to find ways to construct discourse. Some useful attempts include Chris Weedon’s “inverted discourse” and “confrontation discourse”,³¹ Anne Leclerc and Ruth Eligary’s “women’s discourse” and Sharon Marcus’s “anti-rape discourse”.³² They all try to form women’s exclusive power through language construction. Although these attempts to construct discourse have many drawbacks and defects, they are of great significance in essence, because it shows that postmodern feminism not only recognizes the power influence of discourse in the reality of today’s international society, but also tries to change it. In short, postmodern feminist theory of international relations has gradually exerted an important influence on the struggle for and construction of discourse power. It has shaken the discourse hegemony in the theoretical system of international relations.

Different theorists have different understandings of international interaction and international relations. Different theories of international relations have emerged under different social development backgrounds. Realism emphasizes power, liberalism emphasizes system, constructivism emphasizes culture, and the development sequence of different theories is that theorists resort to words. Later readers identify with or criticize them through interpretation. In addition, international interaction is more manifested through negotiation, negotiation, treaty and even war, which is also a game of discourse power.

In addition, in the postmodern feminist international relations theory, some scholars have also distinguished symbolic elements of meaning. The former is nondeterministic, heterogeneous and uncertain. Symbolic language makes language more vague and diffuse. However, this does not mean this development is useless. On the contrary, it also reflects a driving force for development. Traditional, instinctive or symbolic processes can also lead people into a specific situation. From this level, symbolization

³¹ Chris Weedon (1987), *Feminism Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Oxford and New York: Blackwell.

³² 莎朗·马库斯: (2001), 《战斗的身体、战斗的文字: 强奸防范的一种理论和政治》, 《性别政治》, 王逢振主编, 天津社会科学院出版社。

itself represents a kind of progress.³³ Julia Kristeva started her research from the perspective of mother, believing that it is necessary to imagine a specific relationship as a social relationship and at the same time regard it as an obvious social existence. Only in this way can it be further symbolized.³⁴ At this time, a part of discourse analysis in postmodern feminist international relations starts from the template effect of mother, which mainly embodies a method of psychoanalysis. Mother has a model effect on infant's discourse, so it is of great significance to carry out this level of research.

Post-modern feminist international relations theory is not only deeply influenced by post-modern philosophy, but also influenced by discourse turn in international relations. The shift of discourse in international relations to include gender factors has made the development of feminist international relations theory a step forward. To a certain extent, it has made up for the weak focus on power in the shift of sociology, but the carrier of this power realization has changed. Of course, as a form of power, discourse does not play a role alone. It always needs to be combined with other elements in the national relations, such as military actions, economic policies, and diplomatic attitudes in order to exert its influence. For example, in the Vietnam War, the media propaganda at the beginning made the atmosphere of main battle in the United States strong, and constantly sent soldiers to the Vietnam War front. However, as the war became anxious, more importantly, the media reported the anti-humanity and tragic situation of the Vietnam War with value judgment. Anti-war sentiment in the United States forced the United States to withdraw its troops from Vietnam. This is a typical case of the interaction between media discourse and military forces on the country's foreign policy.

3. How to Evaluate the Discourse Power of the Postmodern Feminist International Relations Theory

From the perspective of epistemology, feminist empiricism advocates that the unique experience of women should be added to international relations, revealing the neglect of women in the traditional world, which shows the one-sidedness and limitation of traditional international relations theory from one aspect. Feminist standpoint holds that there is no theory of value neutrality or gender neutrality, and international relations need to be studied from different angles and values, not only from the perspective of women, but also from the perspective of marginal identity subjects. Post-modern feminist international relations theory emphasizes differences, pays attention to the situation of women in the third world, different classes, races, nationalities, skin colors, etc., denies all grand narrative modes, traditional patriarchy and binary opposition. The world is not a linear logic mode of either black or white or either, but a changing, diverse, rich and changeable one. Under the effect of discourse power, this analysis angle is closer to the real world.

Methodologically speaking, discourse analysis in postmodern feminist theory has expanded the development scope of international relations and feminist international

³³ 肖巍 (2014), 《飞往自由的心灵——性别与哲学的女性主义探索》, 北京大学出版社

³⁴ 茱莉亚·克里斯蒂娃 (2015), 《符号学》, 史忠义, 复旦大学出版社。Kelly Olivered (2000), French Feminism Reader, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.

relations. Among them, Kristin Sylvester advocates that visual sensitivity can be enhanced by paying attention to art, and the potential value of feminist international relations theory can be fully explored. She also introduces reference sites and methods for feminist international relations research, such as sculpture, architecture, portraits, etc.³⁵ Fiona Robinson points the establishment of a normative theory that emphasizes relations. She has provided two research tools for this purpose, namely, mapping of responsibilities and criticism of ethical ethnography.³⁶ Eric and Truu attach more importance to the application of critical methodology in feminist international relations.³⁷ Both the artistic perspective and the normative theory reflect the transformation and expansion of discourse, providing new research fields, theoretical sources and research topics for postmodern feminist international relations.

In addition, the discourse view in postmodern feminist international relations theory has contributed to the practical and theoretical development of the world women's movements. An international network for women's studies was established at the Second World Conference on Women held in Copenhagen in 1980, and continued to grow in strength at the Third and Fourth World Conferences on Women. Women's organizations around the world are deeply influenced by postmodernism, and gradually build up a network and platform for mutual communication. By emphasizing differences and constructing their discourse, women's organizations in the third world have also developed. Moreover, it constructs women's discourse power through social culture and ideology, breaking the limitation of traditional feminists who do not attach importance to gender ideology and providing a theoretical basis for revealing patriarchy in the West and the Third World.

However, the postmodern feminist theory in international relations has been always criticized in its development process. Similarly, its view of discourse has also been criticized to some extent. Critics believe that the discourse turn in postmodern feminist international relations theory ignores material power, which is depoliticized and makes the connection between economy, politics and women weaker or even disappear. This kind of discourse is somewhat suspected of banning material and evading politics. Secondly, their attention to discourse may make post-modern feminist international relations only pay attention to the rhetoric of the text and turn a blind eye to the real situation of women. Some critics believe that these scholars oppose only the world discourse described, not the real world. They regard discourse as the source of all power, thus avoiding the real difference and the real body. This is a completely academic style, and there is still a big deviation from the real feminist movement and changing the status quo of women's oppression. It emphasizes the difference and opposes grand narration, but at the same time it also denies the accumulation of knowledge, resulting in the improvement of women's

³⁵ 克瑞斯汀·丝维斯特 (2016), 《将艺术/博物馆纳入女性主义国际关系研究》, 《国际关系女性主义方法论》, 布鲁克·A·艾克里等编, 金铭译, 中信出版社

³⁶ 菲奥娜·罗宾逊 (2016), 《女性主义规范理论方法: 国际关系关怀政治伦理》, 《国际关系女性主义方法论》, 鲁克·A·艾克里等编, 金铭译, 中译出版社。

³⁷ 布鲁克·A·艾克里、杰奎·特鲁 (2016), 《研究时代的斗争与渴望: 女性主义理论方法和女性主义理论方法》, 《国际关系女性主义方法论》, 鲁克·A·艾克里等编, 金铭译, 中译出版社。

political goals, social movements and economic status quo.

In addition, the discourse view of postmodern feminist international relations theory reflects the emphasis on qualitative research and the rejection of quantitative research, which not only conflicts with its view of denying binary opposition, but also narrows the source of power acquisition. In the development of western theories, quantitative research reflects the scientificity, preciseness and conciseness of the research on one side. Qualitative research relies more on the construction and description of language, which has more value judgment color and has certain bias to some extent. On the one hand, it tries to deconstruct the traditional male-centered subject discourse system, and on the other hand, it tries to construct women's own discourse. However, there is chaos in the composition of this deconstruction and construction. It cannot avoid not having the traditional binary opposition view. In the process of deconstructing everything, it is still pursuing some concepts that the enlightenment thought relies on, such as rights, equality, freedom, etc., which falls into the paradox of "problem solving theory" and "norm theory".³⁸

The post-modern feminist international relations theory itself has not formed a complete theoretical system. Although it has absorbed the concepts of deconstruction and discourse from the post-modern philosophers Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard and other scholars, it is still not self-consistent for the current development level and level of feminism. Before great progress has been made in the realistic feminist movement and the improvement of the present situation, the shift to discourse construction and neglect of the objective material world, material power, political structure and system may hinder the development of feminist international relations theory and the deepening of feminist practice.

4. Conclusion

International political theory has evolved and developed with the reality of the international community. From traditional realism and idealism to structural realism, neo-liberalism and constructivism, the development of each theory represents enough problems to arouse people's thinking in the international pattern. Postmodern feminist international relations theory combines postmodernism and feminism with the carrier of the international community, which makes us begin to rethink the changes in international political reality and international relations.

By analyzing the philosophical basis, main viewpoints of postmodern feminist international relations theory, the discourse view formed by its combination with the linguistic turn of international relations theory, and its advantages and disadvantages of development, we clearly realize that discourse is an inextricable topic in the development context of postmodern feminist international relations theory. On the one hand, discourse is a universal cultural carrier and tool, on the other hand, discourse also implies social power, Whoever has mastered the right to "speak" has the right to construct the behavior pattern, which is of great significance to international actors who pay attention to the

³⁸ Jan Jindy Pettman (2004) ,Feminism International Relations after 9/11,Brown Journal of World Affairs, Vol 5,Issue 2 ,Winter/Spring,2004.

generation, maintenance and expansion of power. Of course, studying the discourse right in postmodern feminist international relations does not mean that this is the only content of postmodern feminist international relations research, but that it is necessary to study its discourse view in the process of exploring postmodern feminist international relations theory. International relations are not only the product but also the place where different texts interact with each other. Studying the discourse in this field opens up a new perspective and angle for us to understand the whole and complete picture of the international world.