

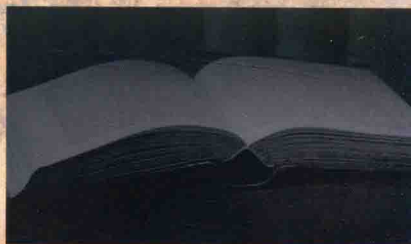


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都市空间与文化想象： 德莱塞小说中女工形象的文化表征

Urban Space and Cultural Imagination:

Representation of Working Girls in Theodore Dreiser's Novels



王育平 著



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序 言

王育平的博士论文《都市空间与文化想象：德莱塞小说中女工形象的文化表征》终于要出版了。作为她硕士、博士期间的导师，我为她感到高兴，更为德莱塞研究得以拓展感到欣慰。

求学时期，王育平勤于读书、孜孜以求，给我留下了深刻的印象。当时的南京大学主体还在南京市中心鼓楼区，可以说处于繁华地段，但王育平的大部分时间是在南京大学图书馆度过的，这一点很使我高兴。身处闹市而能有一心清静、澄明，这是一位青年学者所具有的胸怀。读博期间，王育平也参加了我的一些研究项目，如参与《新编美国文学史》（第三卷）部分章节的编写和文字校对工作以及《当代外国文学》杂志的部分翻译和审稿编校工作等。每一次领到任务，她总是认认真真、精益求精地完成自己所负责的部分工作，展示了性格中严谨、求真的一面。王育平博士留给我的另一个印象是她能专注治学。自从她选定德莱塞作为博士论文研究对象起，已经十多年过去了，王育平依然潜心于这一研究领域。我不禁感佩她的专注精神和学术研究的毅力。在学术研究中，她有一股“咬定青山不放松”的劲头，专注于自己选择的研究领域而不“跟风”，这一点难能可贵。我相信这种专注精神和学术毅力最终会带给她丰硕的学术回报。

另外，我想谈谈德莱塞研究。在20世纪美国文学史上，德莱塞是一位重量级作家。他从入行之初便被称为“美国的左拉”，成为美国自然

II

主义、现代主义运动的旗手。早在1930年,美国小说家辛克莱·刘易斯在其诺贝尔文学奖的获奖感言中强调德莱塞作为美国文学开路先锋的身份,认为他“一扫维多利亚时代美国文坛豪威尔斯式的保守谨慎、虚伪斯文,赋予美国小说以真实、大胆以及生活的激情”。然而,随着美国20世纪中期政治风潮的转变,德莱塞成为很多评论家所避忌的话题,甚至受到了很多恶意攻讦,文学声誉一落千丈。我个人认为,对于一位作家来说,这是很不幸、不公的事情。他的文学魅力和贡献值得进一步开掘。在我国,瞿秋白曾于20世纪30年代向中国读者推介德莱塞,称他是“启明星”作家,后来又涌现了蒋道超等一批德莱塞研究的学者,但总体而言,国内德莱塞研究仍需进一步拓展,并且国内尚不见对德莱塞小说中城市女工的专门研究。王育平博士的专著可以说是这一学术领域很扎实的新成果,希望她今后能够继续关注国外相关研究,进一步推进德莱塞研究,使这位美国严肃作家在当代中国得到应有的欣赏与重视。

是为序。

杨金才

于南京大学和园

前言

本书是我博士阶段四年学习、研究的心血结晶。自2007年我获得博士学位至今,已经有八个年头了。由于多方面原因,书稿一直未能交付出版。去年9月,经过几轮修订的书稿终于提交审稿。今年9月,我在杜克大学访学期间,收到外教社梁晓莉编辑的来信,确认书稿通过评审进入出版程序。欣喜之余,总想要写点什么来纪念那一段青葱岁月。

我之对于德莱塞的研究兴趣,一方面归功于我的导师杨金才先生的启发、指点,另一方面起源于我对德莱塞个人生平经历及作品的浓厚兴趣。我于2000年从山东大学获得英语语言文学学士学位之后,来到南京大学外国语学院开始了长达七年的硕士、博士学习生涯,师从杨金才先生。2003年,在我获得硕士学位、开始攻读博士学位之际,我和杨老师商量博士论文的选题。我们讨论了弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫、斯蒂芬·克莱恩、安吉拉·卡特、萨拉·朱厄特、西奥多·德莱塞等英美作家作为论文选题的可行性,最终确定了西奥多·德莱塞作为我博士论文的主要研究对象。我选择德莱塞的理由,一方面是由于德莱塞出身寒门、自强不息的丰富人生阅历本身像一部励志小说,深深地吸引、打动了我;另一方面,作为美国文学的经典作家,德莱塞在文学评论史上的地位起起落落、几经沉浮,充满传奇色彩,这激发了初登文学研究殿堂的我的好奇心,使我非常想通过自己的阅读、研究去见识德莱塞的“庐山真面目”。

作为美国20世纪上半期现代主义、自然主义流派的掌门人,德莱塞

IV

因其作品对社会现实的描写客观、大胆,批评眼光尖锐犀利,被称为“20世纪美国文学的开路先锋”。德莱塞的作品卷帙浩繁、人物众多,且多为美国都市社会的下层人物。我的研究焦点是德莱塞笔下的女工群体。在美国历史上,女工作为一个社会群体出现于19世纪末20世纪初,是工业化和城市化进程在美国迅速推进的结果之一。当时的美国城市处于社会转型期,新旧思想观念交锋激烈,女性进入家庭之外的工作空间曾引发广泛的讨论与争议。本书主要关注德莱塞早期的三部小说《嘉莉妹妹》、《珍妮姑娘》和《美国悲剧》中的女工形象,通过研究德莱塞对都市女工生活经历和奋斗历程的文化表征,解码这一形象背后的文化意蕴,借以透视对都市女工身份建构有重大影响的文化力量以及德莱塞对女性工作问题的文化立场。从研究视角来看,本书属于文化研究。研究过程以斯图亚特·霍尔的文化表征理论为概念辅助进行文本细读,同时运用新历史主义的“自我型塑”概念分析人物建构自我身份的努力,探讨德莱塞对城市女工形象的文化表征。

本书包括三章内容,分别讨论德莱塞在三部小说中对都市女工的文化表征。第一章围绕《嘉莉妹妹》中嘉莉的形象展开论述,探讨都市女工在20世纪初新兴的消费主义都市空间的身份塑造问题。小说中,出身美国下层劳动阶层的主人公嘉莉被灯红酒绿、光彩炫目的美国城市景观所吸引,敏感的天性使嘉莉意识到消费社会中自我形象的价值。19世纪末期,随着美国社会由生产型向消费型转变,“形象”作为商品交换的重要基础在社会经济关系中的价值日趋重要。以“形象”为核心的新价值体系开始萌芽,体现在人们对服饰、礼仪的注重,对城市景观的迷恋,以及将物质财富视为内在美德的外化从而使对物的崇拜与占有合理化。嘉莉在物质方面的成功正是源于她对“形象”哲学的深刻理解和本能实践。一方面,林林总总的“形象”是嘉莉对城市生活的直观体认,个人外在形象也成为她评价别人的主要标准;另一方面,通过改造、利用自己的形象,嘉莉逐渐从城市生活的边缘地带走向中心区域,最终在表演业中找到了自己的位置,获得了自我追求的成功。小说中德莱塞对消费文化虽有微词,但总的来说,主要持一种向往、肯定的态度,这体现了他对新兴的都市文化生活方式以及对女性职业追求的支持。

第二章聚焦《珍妮姑娘》中德莱塞对女工珍妮的呈现,探讨女工在新

旧社会转型期的都市空间所面临的道德困境。小说中,女工珍妮天性善良、品德高尚,一心一意为他人着想,具有维多利亚式“真女性”传统美德。然而,在20世纪初的美国社会,日益勃兴的消费文化使得城市空间中商品交换原则大行其道,成为一股左右城市女工命运的强大力量。虽然德莱塞将珍妮描绘成善良、无私、有很强的牺牲精神和家庭责任感的传统女性,而珍妮也认同自己在传统性别范式中的女性身份并努力地按照该范式所规定的性别角色建构自己的身份,追求孝女、贤妻、良母三种女性传统身份的统一,但珍妮的自我追求最终未能获得成功,她的经历预言了拜物教统治的城市意识形态中传统价值观念的式微,表达了作者对金钱至上的价值观念的批判,也反映出德莱塞对都市文化生活方式的深刻认识。

本书第三章研究德莱塞在《美国悲剧》中对女工形象的再现,探索在“美国梦”叙事的文化框架之下女工的身份建构问题。《美国悲剧》以一起谋杀案为创作原型,小说中的洛蓓塔即是遇害女工的形象再现。“美国梦”宣扬个人通过努力改变自己的身份,体现了美国所谓的“民主原则”,受到社会各个阶层的欢迎而成为典型的“美国式”人生理想。女工洛蓓塔试图通过劳动与婚姻两种方式来改变自己的社会地位、重塑自己的身份、实现自己的“美国梦”,但由于受到阶级鸿沟、性别歧视、传统伦理等种种文化力量的压制,她的追梦历程一再受挫,最终以死亡宣告失败。从洛蓓塔的角度加以审视,《美国悲剧》是女工的美国梦想蜕变成悲剧的过程。德莱塞通过对洛蓓塔的文化表征,展现了美国城市空间中各种文化力量的较量与斡旋,揭示了美国梦的虚幻性,表达了对女工悲惨命运的同情。

德莱塞的三部女工小说出版时间跨度为25年,反映了德莱塞对城市女工问题的持久关注。三部小说创作于美国20世纪初的社会转型期,分别将女工的自我型塑置于经济模式、道德规范以及社会理想的框架中加以呈现。都市女性的身份建构过程展示了各种文化力量在都市空间的交汇、融合以及矛盾、冲突,展现了美国社会文化的变迁图景,也反映出德莱塞对主流文化叙事的参与。

德莱塞研究是外国文学研究的重要领域。长久以来,评论界形成了德莱塞作为社会批评家的陈旧印象。然而,德莱塞是一位比较多产的作家,社会批判不足以概括德莱塞作品的全貌。新世纪以来,都市文化成为当代外国文学研究的重要阵地,由于德莱塞对于城市生活情有独钟,

他的作品成为研究美国20世纪初期城市文化的重要文本。本书是我博士期间学习、研究的最终成果,但它只是我对德莱塞研究的阶段性成果。

在追随德莱塞的过程中,我的研究课题“德莱塞小说的都市空间书写”有幸获得2014年度教育部人文社会科学研究青年基金资助,这是对我极大的鼓励和鞭策。希望我的研究能够有助于国内学界进一步认识德莱塞的“庐山真面目”。

时光的脚步总是匆匆,但是记忆深处,总有些感动、感激令人难以忘怀。对于本书的成稿,我首先要感谢我的导师杨金才先生。从2000年来到南京大学外国语学院学习至今,杨老师始终是我为人、治学的典范,正是他的言传身教激励着我不断前进,在我稍有懈怠的时候使我警醒、促我奋进。感谢南京大学的刘海平教授、王守仁教授和朱刚教授等师长,在我读博期间,他们开设了英美文学、西方文论和论文写作等博士课程,教会了我批判性思考和学术研究的基本范式,也参与了我毕业论文的评阅、修订工作。南京大学的赵文书教授和何成洲教授也评阅了我的论文,并提出中肯的修改意见;解放军国际关系学院的方杰教授、李建波教授以及南京师范大学的姚君伟教授都为本论文的修订和出版提供了帮助。在感谢这些学界前辈为我提供帮助、指导的同时,我也要感谢陪伴我四年博士学习的同窗好友们,他们为我的论文写作提供了各种帮助和支持,使得原本艰苦的岁月充满了欢乐和温情。

此外,我要感谢上海外语教育出版社的工作人员,特别感谢孙静、梁晓莉和苗杨等老师为本书的出版提供的帮助,感谢审阅书稿并提出宝贵修订意见的匿名专家。我的美国朋友Kim Strong女士曾对本书英文原稿进行语言的修订、润色,美籍文学研究专家Keith Newlin教授和他的学生Elizabeth Heinz Swails女士通读了书稿的全文并进行了部分语言修订工作,在此一并致以谢忱。

最后,感谢我的丈夫吴志杰和女儿逸秋、逸岚对我研究工作的理解和支持。你们的陪伴和鼓励犹如一盏明灯,照亮、温暖那条寂静、冷清的学术之路。

2015年9月

于杜克大学Lily图书馆

Abbreviations

When parenthetically citing Theodore Dreiser's works, I have used the following abbreviations:

<i>AT</i>	<i>An American Tragedy</i> (1925)
<i>D</i>	<i>Dawn</i> (1931)
<i>JG</i>	<i>Jennie Gerhardt</i> (1911)
<i>SC</i>	<i>Sister Carrie</i> (1900)
<i>T</i>	<i>The Titan</i> (1914)

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Introduction

From the last decade of the nineteenth century to the years following the First World War, working women remained a topic of heated cultural debate and a subject of popular literary representation in America. As industrialization and urbanization swept over the whole nation with great speed and intensity, a greater workforce was needed to keep up with the pace of industrial development. Women, formerly the occupants of mainly domestic spheres, began to join male workers and assume an important role in American industrial production. The entry of women into the nation's workplace enhanced economic growth. At the same time, it also indicated significant changes in the sex ratio of the working class and in the pattern of gender expectations, which created fear and anxiety among people who held fast to conventional ideals and values. The widespread debate over women's working outside the realm of house and hearth also extended to the literary domain. Narratives of working women rose around the 1880s and prevailed in the following decades. Working women, often termed as working girls because of their lower social status and usually young age, figured as major characters in many literary works produced in that era. Belonging to both the social constellation of the working class and the category of "the second sex" in a patriarchal tradition, working girls were positioned at the most unprivileged intersection of class and gender and

2 were quite literally subject to social prejudices and repressive cultural forces based on both class hierarchy and gender differentiation. Theodore Dreiser's peculiar stance towards the issue of working women is of particular interest for revealing the complex historical situation of working girls in turn-of-the-century American society. Dreiser was depicted by most biographers as a "womanizer" who became emotionally entangled with numerous women. However, in his fiction, Dreiser depicted the lives of women, especially those from the underclass, with more sympathy and understanding than most of his contemporaries. The apparent incongruity between life experience and novel writing points to the tension between reality and fiction and invites critical attention. The present undertaking takes up three novels by Dreiser that feature working girl characters, namely, *Sister Carrie* (1900), *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911), and *An American Tragedy* (1925), and investigates Dreiser's representation of working girls in the cultural milieu of turn-of-the-century American society, attempting both to unveil the shaping forces constitutive to working girls identity-construction within the frameworks of gender and class as well as to decipher Dreiser's cultural stance towards the rising issue of working women.

Women's entrance into the workforce was a by-product of American economic growth. In the second half of the nineteenth century, America was in the heyday of industrial development owing to the impact of the industrial revolution. In 1851, when Great Britain held the first World's Fair at the Crystal Palace in London, American products stood out above the rest and represented the newest developments in science and technology (Porter). From 1870 to 1900 the United States became the world's foremost industrial nation and American society "ranked as a mature industrial society" after 1893 (Gutman 13). This industrial growth entailed a larger demand for laborers and resulted in a continual movement of the country population into the city, a great portion of which consisted of young girls seeking opportunities in the city. Due to their lack of training and education, most working girls secured jobs in factories and made a hand-to-mouth living by doing piecework. Their working conditions reflected the hardships common to most sweatshops of

the time. Despite the low pay and harsh working conditions, many women, especially women from poor families, saw factory jobs as a means to secure better lives and eagerly seized whatever opportunities offered. Statistics show that by 1900, female workers made up 20 percent of the American labor force and most of them worked in sweatshops (Kava and Bodin 144). In May 1897, Susan B. Anthony claimed that “The close of this nineteenth century finds every trade, vocation, and profession open to women, and every opportunity at their command for preparing themselves to follow these occupations” (137). Although the optimism in Anthony’s statement borders on exaggeration, it also bears witness to the increasing visibility of women in the public spheres of work and business under the influence of expanding industrial production.

Working women made substantial contributions to industrial development and accelerated the speed of national economic growth. However, controversies sprouted concerning the legitimacy of women’s work outside the domestic domain. In the nineteenth century, Victorian ideology about gender roles dominated social mentality. Women were perceived as a “softer” sex with a pious, pure, gentle, nurturing, benevolent and sacrificing nature whose legitimate sphere was at home (Woloch 125). The world outside the home remained mainly a male domain from which virtuous women refrained. The Victorian perception of womanhood also found expression in literature as evidenced by the fiction, poems, and plays that instructed women on proper behavior and promoted the internalization of ideals about Victorian femininity. Popular culture also adopted “home and mother” as central themes.^①

① In the historical context of the nineteenth century, the promotion of women’s role as wife and mother was an action initiated by a number of early nineteenth-century avant-garde campaigners for women’s rights such as Sarah Hale and Catharine Beecher. The latent significance of such a strategy was that, by assigning more value to the domestic sphere in which women presided, the struggle for women’s rights was better justified and more solidly grounded. However, such a tactic soon showed its adverse effects as later feminists were to discover. The notion of domesticity as essential to women’s identity in the social structure resulted in more restriction than advantages for women and became target of criticism for women’s right promoters.

4

The end of the century saw the gradual waning of the Victorian age, but the old values still functioned as major guidance for conventional-minded people. Since the world of business and labor was traditionally perceived as a public sphere that sanctioned an exclusively male presence, women's "invasion" into this sphere caused question and censure. Their presence in the workplace was viewed as improper behavior that violated the social gender norms delineated by conventional ideology. Social commentators maintained that young women in the workplace were exposed to potentially dangerous conditions such as walking alone at night, living in lodging houses, dealing with male employers, and possible sexual harassment, and they regarded these conditions as contributive to women's immorality (Wright 31—31; Fuchs 64; Kessler-Harris 135). In particular, they cited the more revealing dress of girls who worked in the tormenting and usually sweltering factory rooms as evidence of their loose morality and predicated that they were liable to have illicit sexual dealings with the men with whom they came in contact during their work time. The exaggerated picture of working girls as potential prostitutes gained considerable prominence and resulted in low esteem for working girls in general. Contempt and fear were consequently the most commonly held public opinions concerning the growing number of working girls.

In response to the great changes in the social and economic realms, literary works featuring working girl characters sprang up and played an important role in the formation of cultural climate in that era. Many writers showed their concern over the issue of women's work. For instance, Henry James once depicted a shop-girl character in *The Princess Casamassima* (1886), and Edith Wharton produced short stories such as "Bunner Sisters" which described struggling working women. The working-girl group was also a favorite topic for popular writers like James W. Sullivan and Julia Ralph, who published many tenement tales depicting their

lives.^① Laura Hapke has summed up the boom of working girl novels:

From the 1890s onward, staid publishing houses with a wide middle-class readership brought out numerous tenement tales with sweatshop and box-factory workers, shop girls and cloak models, genteel daughters of failed businessmen reduced to department store work, even former dance hall girls who manage saloons and female stevedores who take men's names. (*Tales of the Working Girl* 4)

The proliferation of working girl narratives exemplified the pervasive presence of working girls in American society at that time. Hapke further explores the cultural connotation embodied in the thriving of this genre:

Mainstream working girl fiction, produced largely by and for middle-class consumption, gave voice to the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century controversy about women and work, whether presenting the protagonist's struggle to make ends meet as pathetic or heroic, whether excoriating or defending her removal from the domestic sphere, denying or trumpeting her right to a living wage through solidarity with a striking labor sisterhood, or deploring or applauding her newly won upward mobility. Reflecting the gender, class, and political orientation of their creators, these works comprised a diverse cultural response to woman's movement away from the "separate" sphere in which she had dwelled. (ibid. 6)

① James W. Sullivan was a journalist and writer who produced stories and novellas about working women in the end-of-the century metropolis of New York. His writings on women's work include such stories as "Cohen's Figure," "Minnie Kelsey's Wedding," "Not Yet: The Day Dreams of Ivan Grigorovitch," and a collection titled *Tenement Tales of New York*. Julia Ralph was a reporter for the *New York Sun* who wrote many stories about German and Irish shop girls based on materials from her reporting work. Among Ralph's working girl tales are "Dutch Kitty's White Slippers," "Love in the Big Barracks," and the collection *People We Pass: Stories of Life among the Masses of New York City*.

As an outcome of American cultural transformation around the turn of the century, working girl fiction captures the contemporary concerns and debates over women's cultural legitimacy in the workplace and reproduces it in literary forms. Since "storytelling is never an innocent occupation" (Hughes-Hallett, qtd. in Hapke, *Tales of the Working Girl* iii), a story incorporates the "gender, class, and political orientation" of its narrator into the text and communicates as much message about the historical context as the state of mind of the author. The literary text, viewed in this light, presents an interesting site that grants the interplay between authorial creative energies and influential cultural forces. Working girl tales document the historical situation of working women as well as the cultural stances and attitudes of their authors.

Theodore Dreiser (1871 — 1945) came onto the American literary stage at the turn of the twentieth century, and working girl characters form an important category in the gallery of his characters. Dreiser's enthusiasm for working girls as a subject of representation derived from his personal life experience as well as from the cultural influences of his time. Dreiser grew up in a large immigrant family. Headed by an emotional mother and an economically incompetent father, the family moved from one place to another for the sole purpose of keeping everyone "fed, clothed and alive" (Frohock 8). Since the family struggled constantly to make both ends meet, most of the children seized upon whatever opportunity available to survive. Two of Dreiser's elder sisters, Emma and Mame, entered into illicit relationships with much older men. Their experiences made a visible impact upon Dreiser's writing in that they provided the inspiration for his first two novels. Equally inspiring was Dreiser's own working experience, which actually began in his teens. Starting as an errand boy, Dreiser held various odd jobs before he entered the newspaper business. He had worked among the lower stratum of society and had been in constant contact with girls and boys from the working class. During his career in journalism, Dreiser had the chance to profile the most spectacular life of the "tycoons" and document the bleakest scenes of city slums. The