

# 安吉拉·卡特的小说 对表现论的颠覆

SUBVERSION OF REPRESENTATIONS  
IN ANGELA CARTER'S FICTIONS

曾雪梅 / 著



中国社会科学出版社

安吉拉·卡特的小说  
对表现论的颠覆

SUBVERSION OF REPRESENTATIONS  
IN ANGELA CARTER'S FICTIONS

曾雪梅 / 著

中国社会科学出版社

## 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

安吉拉·卡特的小说对表现论的颠覆 = Subversion of Representations in Angela Carter's Fictions 英文 / 曾雪梅著. —北京: 中国社会科学出版社, 2014. 9  
ISBN 978 - 7 - 5161 - 4977 - 5

I. ①安… II. ①曾… III. ①卡特, A. —小说研究—英文 IV. ①I561. 45

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2014) 第 241813 号

---

出版人 赵剑英  
责任编辑 夏 侠  
责任校对 韩冰曦  
责任印制 王 超

---

出 版 **中国社会科学出版社**  
社 址 北京鼓楼西大街甲 158 号 (邮编 100720)  
网 址 <http://www.csspw.cn>  
中文域名: 中国社科网 010 - 64070619  
发 行 部 010 - 84083685  
门 市 部 010 - 84029450  
经 销 新华书店及其他书店

---

印 刷 北京市大兴区新魏印刷厂  
装 订 廊坊市广阳区广增装订厂  
版 次 2014 年 9 月第 1 版  
印 次 2014 年 9 月第 1 次印刷

---

开 本 710 × 1000 1/16  
印 张 9.75  
插 页 2  
字 数 201 千字  
定 价 29.00 元

---

凡购买中国社会科学出版社图书, 如有质量问题请与本社联系调换

电话: 010 - 64009791

版权所有 侵权必究

## 序

曾雪梅博士的大作《安吉拉·卡特的小说对表现论的颠覆》即将出版，值得庆贺。

自1789年法国妇女走上街头以来，世界妇女解放运动历经三次浪潮，从获得选举权、批判性别歧视和男性霸权到关注妇女在政治、经济、社会以及妇女个人等方面的权利，终于取得了很大的成就，并且形成了一个相对完整的思想体系。

在世界妇女解放运动思想体系的构建中，女性作家用生动的艺术形象、宽广的生活场景以及独特而又细腻的情感表达，构建了旨在表达女性诉求的文学世界，为争取女性权利起到了极其重要的作用。比如说，艾莉森·卢里（Alison Lurie）、玛吉·皮尔斯（Maggie Piercy）、玛格丽特·劳伦斯（Margaret Lawrence）、玛丽琳·弗伦奇（Marilyn French）、安吉拉·卡特（Angela Carter）、玛丽琳·罗宾逊（Marilyn Robinson）、奥德尔·罗德（Audre Lorde）、费·威尔登（Fay Weldon）、默尔·柯林斯（Merle Collins）、艾丽斯·沃克（Alice Walker）、多丽丝·莱辛（Doris Lessing）等杰出的女性作家，都以生动的艺术形象或以自身的经历，直接或间接地表达了她们的美好情愫和作为女性的诉求。

在这众多女性作家中，曾被誉为自1945年以来最伟大英国作家之一的安吉拉·卡特显得很“别致”。她的“别致”之处并不在于其作品反映了女性的主体意识觉醒或女性的自我追求，而是在于她对男性和女性霸权两者都进行了解构或颠覆。卡特通过作品似乎在告诉人们，相互平等和相互尊重是理想的两性关系的基础，任何一方的霸权都会导致两性关系的扭曲甚或悲剧。而在对男性和女性霸权的解构或颠覆中，她尤

其擅长讲述解构或颠覆男性霸权的故事。她在《新夏娃的激情》这部小说中，就通过讲述主要人物的易装、变性、身份认同等故事，形象地表达了自己对解构或颠覆男性霸权的认识。

卡特曾大胆地宣称：“我干的事就是拆穿神话。”<sup>①</sup>国内外有不少学者循着这句话，对卡特“拆穿神话”的作品进行了解读。曾雪梅博士的这部专著是这诸多解读作品中的一部。不过，所不同的是，曾雪梅博士的著作不仅围绕着“拆穿神话”来论述卡特的作品，而且还告诉读者卡特是如何“拆穿神话”的。大致说来，她是从三个方面，即“对现实的颠覆”、“对传统女性身份的颠覆”以及“对男性主体性的颠覆”，来对“拆穿神话”及其“拆穿”的方式进行论证的。她在论文中还展现了卡特的女性主义思想的具体发展过程：即从《霍夫曼博士的欲望机器》中对父权制对女性的压迫的揭露，到《新夏娃的激情》中对性别神话的解构，再到《马戏团之夜》中对两性关系的构建的探讨。曾雪梅的研究没有跟随国内女性主义批评以揭露和抨击父权制为使命的主流思潮，而是另辟蹊径，运用后现代主义对表现论进行颠覆的理论，对卡特的批判策略进行了解读。就我有限的阅读而言，曾雪梅的这部著作是国内外首部较为全面地论述卡特小说中女性主义思想及其叙事策略的学术专著，为卡特研究奠定了坚实的基础——这是难能可贵的。

不过，更加难能可贵的是，在她写作期间，纵然有一些自以为已经“大腕”了的高人对她的论题、写作框架等指指点点，她仍然能够坚持自己的主张。这份自信让人看着舒服、爽气。我以为，做学问是一件带有些私人的性质，所谓文章千古事，得失心自知。别人的指点不可谓不好，不过，写作毕竟不能标准化或“八股化”——非得像某些人说的那样一个章节运用一种理论，讨论一部作品中的一个问题就有道理了？！果然如此，非但学理上说不过去，而且大家都千篇一律，那还有什么意思呢？有位学者说得好：“文学批评虽然通常是以作品或作家为批评对象，但批评家通过批评所阐释的仍然是批评家自己对这个世界的认识……如果在这篇文章里根本找不到批评家自己对这个世界的认识，那

<sup>①</sup> Angela Carter, *Shaking a Leg*, New York: Penguin Books, 1997, p. 38.

肯定就是一篇不好的批评，至少是一篇空话连篇的批评。”<sup>①</sup>也就是说，文学批评其实是见心见智的一件事情，万万不能学着别人的腔调，变成标准化了的不走心的机械或空泛的议论。

此外，除了这份自信，曾雪梅博士还给我留下了一个十分认真的印象。其实，她已经具有扎实的专业基础知识和理论素养，但是她做事还是愿意较真。仗着这份较真，她出色地完成了博士论文，并顺利地获得博士学位。尽管从现在的这个版本看还有些不尽人意的地方，我以为这部由博士论文修改而成的学术专著还是为卡特研究做出了很大的贡献，会为以后的研究提供重要的参考。

衷心祝愿曾雪梅博士在学术道路上稳步前进，取得更大的成绩。

乔国强

2014年6月2日于上海

---

<sup>①</sup> 陈冲：《文学批评应该介入什么现实？》，转引自《天花是如何乱坠的》，《文学报》，上海书店出版社，第186页。

## Abstract

English contemporary novelist, dramatist, critic, short-story writer, journalist, Angela Carter (1940 – 1992) provided any critic of her texts plenty of material for thought, since her narratives habitually draw on an enormous range of sources. She was the author of an impressively wide-ranging oeuvre. Magic Realism, Surrealism, Fantasy, Science Fiction, Gothic, Feminism, Postmodernism—all of these categories apply, and yet none of them, encompass the full spectrum of her accomplishments. Carter's attraction does not just lie in the variety and volume of her work, but in its depth. Her writing shows her formidable intellect and her love of ideas. She had devoted her literary career to deconstructing the traditional norms of Western culture: "I am all for putting new wine in old bottles, especially if the pressure of the new wine makes the old bottle explode" (Carter 1997: 37). In combining the "sub-genres", or the "less-respectable" forms of fiction, such as romance, spies, porn, crime, gothic and science fiction, Hollywood movies, with the so-called "high" culture including theories of Bakhtin, Derrida, Foucault, Marquez, the plays of Shakespeare, to mention but a very few, Carter endows her works with the features of postmodernist deconstruction and reconstruction of Western culture with the fusion of low and high culture, and makes "the old bottle explode".

In "The Fiction of Angela Carter: The Woman Who Loved to Retell Stories", Robert Eaglestone focuses on Carter's rewriting of the powerful narratives in Western cultural tradition. He points out: "the world and ourselves

as beings in the world are made up through culture, or more simply, through stories" (Eaglestone 197) . So our sense of existence, of ourselves, of our relationships with others, with the world and with the choices we make are stories. "Stories construct us and are, in turn, something we ourselves construct" (Eaglestone 197) . Carter rewrites stories to show that the traditional narratives-especially those concerning gender question-are stories, not truth but only shapes constructed by traditional culture, and so can be rewritten and reorganized. Carter puts those master narratives which misrepresent women into question and tries to rewrite them. By rewriting, Carter on one hand imitates the representations of the so-called reality, the subjectivity of both male and female, on the other hand subverts them at the same time with parodying those representations. In Carter's novels, reality is reflected to be fictional to show how Western culture constructs the relationship between man and woman; both male and female images are presented to be unnatural and dehumanized-they are not real men and women, only representations modeled by patriarchal norms. Carter's strategy is a postmodernist one, for her subversion of reality, subjectivity and representation remains at the center of Alice Jardine's definition of postmodernism (Jardine 88) . Her strategy is more a feminist one, because by both using and abusing those historical images, Carter is able to subvert the patriarchal binary logic which reduce woman to the object of man's desire. Both postmodernism and feminism claim that the representational systems of the Western culture have admitted only the vision of the constitutive male subject. Both dismantle the "Grand Narratives" of realism in which Western representations of reality, male, female, sex, and gender relationship are products of access to power, not to Truth. In Carter's challenge, postmodernism and feminism work together successfully to overthrow the representations of reality and male/ female relationship in patriarchal norms.

Mystudy analyzes three of Angela Carter's novels: *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, *The Passion of New Eve*, and *Nights at the Circus*, in order to discuss how Carter succeeds in undermining representations of Western culture to upset the patriarchal norms concerning gender relation-



ship. In *The Sadeian Woman*, her essay in “cultural history”, and concentrating on pornography and sexuality, Carter argues that sexuality, especially female sexuality is wrongly represented in the stories and models provided by Western culture. In those stories and models, female sexuality “does not know how to desire. She is always prey, never the hunter. . . She must not take her own allure seriously. She must laugh it off” (Carter 1979: 67) . So Carter writes stories to challenge the implicit assumptions and to reorganize women’s past experiences in patriarchal history. She sets the plots of her fiction against some postmodern circumstances far away from the real world; in *Nebulous Time*, in postmodern city and towns which remind the readers of cyborgs in Hollywood movies, or in the apparently fictional world created by feminine narratives, or in the a-history world of the Siberian tribal people. Each of the contexts of the three novels constantly reflects itself to be fictional in which reality of the patriarchal society is deconstructed. At the same time, the representations of male and female subjectivity are subverted by use of parody.

This book manages to explore how Angela Carter subverts representations of reality, subjectivity of both man and woman in her fictions. It is divided into five parts: Introduction, Chapter One, Chapter Two, Chapter Three and Conclusion.

The Introduction part is divided into four parts. Part I starts with an introduction to Carter’s literary creation, focusing on the three novels I choose to analyze in my dissertation: *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, *The Passion of New Eve*, and *Nights at the Circus*. Part II is the literature review, offering critical comments from other critics related to the theme of my dissertation, and presenting the progress made in my dissertation based on the analysis of the predecessors. Part 3 lays the theoretical foundation for the discussion of Angela Carter’s subversion of representations of reality and subjectivity. Part 4 gives the layout of my research. The reason why I chose the three novels of Carter mentioned above to do my research is also presented with the analysis of the linking of the three novels to show the element of continuity and how Carter’s feminist thoughts develop in those works from one to another.

Chapter One, Chapter Two and Chapter Three the author analyzes how representations of reality and subjectivity of both man and woman are subverted in the contexts of the three novels respectively. In Chapter One: "Subversion of Reality: The Metafictional Reality", the approach of postmodern metafiction is analyzed to show that Carter severely challenges the sense of time and space, and the notions of reality and fiction to undermine the realistic truth and reality in which men are subject, while women are reduced to the object of male desires. Each of the texts of the three novels deliberately and constantly exposes the fictionality of the novel itself. Through either the world lost in Nebulous Time in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, or the artificial city and towns in *The Passion of New Eve*, or the fictional world created by feminine narratives in *Nights at the Circus*, Carter intends to suggest that the so-called reality and truth in western representations are merely productions of patriarchal culture. She deconstructs realistic sense of space and time in order to overthrow the patriarchal norms concerning gender relationship.

Chapter Two and Chapter Three the author explores how Carter challenges the patriarchal notions of subjectivity of both female and male. Chapter Two: "Subversion of Stereotyped Femininity: From the Virgin Whore to the Winged Victory" deciphers Carter's deconstruction of stereotyped female images in patriarchal norms. Carter's improvement of female characterization from the static and passive, fragmented prostitutes toward the active, constructive image of the bird woman is revealed as the link of the three novels in this chapter. In *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, Carter focuses on exposing patriarchal sins. She parodies and exaggerates the stereotyped woman images. By presenting the static and fragmented female images, she suggests how women are sacrificed in the patriarchal society. In *The Passion of New Eve*, there are again stereotyped female images incarnated in the Hollywood movie star and the prostitute. But a change of female images from the traditional "perfect woman" and sexual object to the radical feminist is made apparent with the depiction of "Mother", a parody and canalization of acme of feminist ideas. Carter purports her satire upon Mother to offer her criticism for an i-

deal and utopian feminism as well as feminist totalitarianism. In *Nights at the Circus*, A bird heroine is depicted who can escape being stereotyped and objectified by man actively. She leads to the way out of gender confusion; her union with the hero based on mutual need and love, while keeping her own self at the same time makes her find a new and complete self.

While the objecthood of women has been overthrown, the male subjecthood undergoes sea-change until it has been finally undermined and reconstructed. Chapter Three: "Subversion of Male Subjecthood: From the Desire Consumer to the Lover" analyzes how the male self is changed from ferocious male subjecthood which trample down females, to the sexual object of their own desires in the three novels. An improvement of characterization like that analyzed in Chapter Three can also be seen with the analysis of how the male self moves in the range of the three novels from the obtrusive one, to the castrated one, but finally is reconstructed by love between male and female. A group of ferocious male images are presented in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*. They objectify women according to their sexual desire or desire for authority. But they all encounter their doom of being destroyed at the end. In *The Passion of New Eve*, the alchemic search of male complete self undergoes a fake alchemical process. Furthermore, the chauvinistic male subjecthood is castrated and changed into the sexual object of itself, endowed with a female body. However, Angela Carter's aim is not to only reverse the gender roles of male and female in patriarchal binary logics. *Nights at the Circus* deconstructs the subjecthood of the hero, and reconstructs it in a new way, when the hero is in union with the heroine.

In the conclusion part, the author reviews the central three chapters. The author has chosen the above mentioned three novels because they reveal a strong element of continuity, or even communality. Taking the form of science fiction, all three are set against the postmodern circumstances, yet all related to reality. From the first novel of this series of the three, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* to the last one, *Nights at the Circus*, the track of Carter's feminist reflection on gender issue can be clearly traced. There is a

movement toward a solution, a way out of the gender predicament. No matter the way has been found or not, the endeavour is worthwhile, for at least Carter pushes the gender question to the surface and exposes it to the bombardment.

# Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	(1)
<b>Introduction</b> .....	(1)
1. Angela Carter's Literary Creation .....	(1)
2. Literature Review .....	(5)
3. Theoretical Basis for the Research .....	(16)
4. Framework of the Book .....	(23)
<b>Chapter One Subversion of Reality : The Metafictional</b>	
<b>Reality</b> .....	(26)
1. Nebulous Time .....	(29)
2. Reality as Cyborgs .....	(39)
3. Reality Reconstructed by Feminine Narratives .....	(46)
<b>Chapter Two Subversion of the Stereotyped Womanhood : From</b>	
<b>Virgin Whore to Winged Victory</b> .....	(56)
1. The Passive, Static Female Images .....	(59)
2. From the Whore to the Angry Woman .....	(70)
3. The Bird Woman : A New Woman in the New Century .....	(80)
<b>Chapter Three Subversion of Male Subjecthood : From the</b>	
<b>Desirer to the Lover</b> .....	(93)
1. The Male Subjecthood of Infernal Desire .....	(95)

2. From the Subject of Desire to the Desired Object .....	(107)
3. The Lover; Construction of the New Male Self .....	(117)
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	(128)
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	(132)

# Introduction

## 1. Angela Carter's Literary Creation

Angela Olive Carter (1940-1992), a British short story writer, novelist, journalist, dramatist and critic, essayist, and the winner of four dominant awards of English literature, was one of the most original writers in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. For her 26-year literary career, she had published nine novels, four collections of short stories, three screen plays, and also some non-fiction works, radio-plays, essays, poetry, translations, etc. "She is popular with critics because she gives them so much to work with" (Gamble 9). The high volume together with the variety of different sources, genres and ideas offers a vast mine for critics to dig and explore. Angela Carter drew most attention from the critics in the last two decades of the twentieth century and it is said that the number of theses dealing with her in British institutions outweighs the number on Shakespeare. She is not to be buried into oblivion since her death in 1992, because she is observed even more in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The year of 2006 was called "Carter's Year" in England. It was a year of Angela Carter celebration: the Lyric Hammersmith unveiled its stage version of her 1980s novel, *Nights at the Circus*; the National Theatre worked on a dramatisation, by the playwright Bryony Lavery, of her last novel, *Wise Children*; the *Vintage Paperback House*, which publishes much of her writing, brought out new editions of six of her books.

Angela Carter was born in 1940 in Eastbourne, Sussex, but grew up in

South London. She suffered from teenage anorexia caused by low self-esteem though all of her immediate female relatives were strong women of striking candor and pragmatism. Young as she was, Carter experienced social movements of the 1960s including the second wave of the English feminist movement, the closing of mines and the breaking of mining strikes, and the failures of the socialist revolution in general. These movements left traces later to be found in her novels. Following in the footsteps of her father, she worked as a journalist for the *Croydon Advertiser*. This experience as a junior reporter obviously influenced her literary career, because she later said that her career was hampered by a "demonic inaccuracy as regards fact" (quoted in Gamble 7). She married Paul Carter when she was only twenty, and moved to Bristol, gaining a degree at Bristol University in 1965.

Beginning in poetry and journalism, Angela Carter's literary career flourished in fiction and she metamorphosed into one of the most original writers of the post-World War II period. Her literary creation can be roughly divided into three periods corresponding with the stages of her life: the early works in the 1960s, master works from the 1970s to the 1980s, and the last work in the 1990s.

The first period of her literary career in the 1960s saw Carter's development from a beginner in literary creation to one of the most popular English writers with both the reading public and the critics. During this period, she published two of her Bristol Trilogy: *Shadow Dance* (1966) and *Several Perceptions* (1968) (the other one is *Love* in 1971). Carter introduced her characteristic interrogation of sexuality in these novels. *The Magic Toyshop* (1967) developed further the theme of sexual fantasy and won her "John Llewellyn Rhys Prize". Carter was well on the way to being a successful novelist, because *Several Perceptions* won her "Somerset Maugham Award" in 1968. However, she left Bristol and her failing marriage for Japan very suddenly with the premium she got from the "Somerset Maugham Award".

The second period covers Carter's staying in Japan from 1969 to 1972, which was a watershed for her literary career. Although she left the English crit-



ic scene and it took a long time for her to regain her early success in English reading public, her attempt to understand a new culture was worthwhile. Her stay in Japan produced her new perspectives about gender problem. She also developed an increased sense of artifice by which she explored gender relationship in a way deviating from the sense of reality she had for her earlier works. In her essay, "Oriental Romances-Japan", Carter says: "I wanted to live for a while in a culture that is not now nor has ever been a Judeo-Christian one, to see what it was like" (Carter 1982: 28). Carter came to Japan and found herself in an actual space outside of the Western metaphysical system. She was thrown into Tokyo as a Western woman and had to face the reality of her former subjectivity being erased. She claimed that she "learnt what it is to be a woman and became radicalised" (Carter 28).

These three years in Japan which would be proved to be Angela Carter's most ambitious and successful creative period left marks on her works from the mid-70s to the mid-80s. In these works, Carter seems to turn decisively towards joyously turbulent, fantastic, picaresque, allegorical adventures and energetic speculative fictions vitalized by a polyphonic postmodernist voice—a voice that becomes more and more overtly charged with an ironic critique of ideology and a feminist politics. She moves away from the realistic settings in her early novels to the postmodern space and time to put the subjectivity and the so-called truth of reality into interrogation. *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972) was written during Carter's stay in Japan. The novel starts with a war between reality and the imaginative, reason and irrationality, and ends with the reality and truth of patriarchal society severely shattered. What Carter saw in the notoriously patriarchal society of Japan is reflected by those fierce male figures and pathetic female figures in the novel.

After Japan, she explored the United States and Europe, helped by her fluency in French and German. In 1977 Carter married Mark Pearce, with whom she had one son. In the same year, *The Passions of New Eve* (1977) was published, the protagonist of which continues to lose in the post-holocaust world essentially similar to that in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoff-*