



Global Conference on Gender Studies

07 - 09 December 2023

Berlin, Germany

Study on the “Publicization” of Love in Early 20th Century China: Analysis centered on Du Cheng Shu&Qu Jiang’s Love Letter

Zhang Yan

China University of Political Science and Law

Abstract

This article attempts to answer the question of "love" and why it has always entered the public sphere in Chinese history. This article takes the love letter incident of Wanqing as a case study and uses the process tracking method to classify and integrate various dialects in the Qu Du Incident. The love letter incident in the late Qing Dynasty was famous for the Du Qu incident. Therefore, this article is based on the love letter texts and paper media narratives in the events of Du Qu, Qiu Gongyi, and Han Yang. It horizontally compares the consideration and self-expression of young men and women facing the issue of love, and vertically explores the premature and delayed publicity of love issues under the trend of gender equality since the late Qing and Republic of China. How love letters were exposed in newspapers during the love letter incident allowed for the preservation of the writing of sexual love between men and women since the late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China. The publication of male love letter texts has forced love writing, which originally belonged to the private sector, to be placed under the spotlight of the public sector of paper media for public evaluation. The examination and comments of various parties in the public sector on love issues are a necessary process for private love writing to move toward the public sector. The issue of love has entered the public sphere through the evaluation of love letters from various parties. However, during the late Qing and Republic of China period, the issue of love still faced the scrutiny of traditional Chinese gender ethics and morality, making it difficult to achieve publicity of love issues.

Keywords: Early 20th Century China, Free Love, "Publicization" of Love, Public Sphere, Feminism in China.