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## Topography of Anachronism

### Mapping Utopian Potentiality of *Herland*

KISHI Madoka

The map that would enable us to visit Charlotte Perkins Gilman's feminist utopia in her 1915 novel, *Herland*, seems to have been lost, perhaps irretrievably so. Set immediately before World War I, the novel chronicles three men's discovery of—and the attempted acculturation to—Herland, an all-women civilization in a hidden plateau, where women give birth to their offspring by parthenogenesis. Vandyck Jennings, the sociologist-narrator who returns from his expedition to the gynocentric community with his two friends, Terry O. Nicholson and Jeff Margrave, begins his narrative with a disclaimer for the possible inaccuracy of his recollections of the days in Herland: “This is written from memory, unfortunately. If I could have brought with me the material I so carefully prepared, this would be a very different story” (*Herland* 3). Jennings is deprived of all the tangible evidence that would prove the existence of the all-women utopia, where citizens live harmoniously without the concept of poverty, competition, illness, crime, and gender norms; he is allowed to return to his native land only on condition that he would not “in any way betray the location of [the] country” (143). The visibility of Gilman's feminist utopia thus hinges precariously on the clumsy narrative of the narrator who apologetically describes himself as “never [being] good at descriptions anyhow,” and the road to Herland seems to be cordoned off forever from the rest of the world (3).

Yet in the first place, would it ever be possible, even if Jennings did offer us the map Herland, to envision that quixotic space, feminist utopia, at our present moment? There to have been a time, still not too long ago, when the place was thought to be found in our vicinity. In a 1994 interview by Judith Butler, Gayle Rubin recollects the days in which she wrote her landmark essay, “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex” (1975), when she, using Butler's words, seems to have “speculated that it might be possible get beyond . . . ‘gender identity’ . . . if one also could do something like overthrow kinship.” Rubin responds to Butler's suggestion: “I was young and optimistic about social change. In those days there was a common expectation that utopia was around the corner. I feel very

differently now” (Rubin and Butler 66). As shown in her application of Marxist material historiography in “Traffic,” the utopianism that Rubin refers to as permeating the era was a hallmark of the burgeoning socialist feminism of the 1970s, to which we could hear an echo from Gilman’s 1915 version of feminist utopia. Put simply, socialist feminism was conceived as the “synthesis of radical feminism and Marxist analysis” (Eisenstein 197). Hartmann, in her 1979 essay that set the contour for the subsequent discussion of socialist feminism, points to the necessity of deploying Marxist methodology for feminist questions: “While Marxist analysis provides essential insight into the laws of historical development, and those of capital in particular, the categories of Marxism are sex-blind. Only a feminist analysis reveals the systematic character of relations between men and women. Yet feminist analysis by itself is inadequate because it has been blind to history and materialist” (2). Put together, the alliance between Marxism and feminism would uncover causes of sexual inequity by historicizing the partnership of patriarchy and capitalism. Accordingly, one of the socialist feminism’s central aims has been to dismantle capitalist-patriarchy, the coalescence of capitalism and male dominance, as a transformable social construction that camouflages itself as a natural given.

Despite its criticism on classic Marxist’s sex-blindness, socialist feminists’ revolutionary aspiration for the social change based on the modification of family structure is rooted in one of the foundational Marxist texts, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). Friedrich Engels’s enterprise is to trace the history of family in order to demonstrate the historical contingency of monogamous household. Drawing on his contemporary anthropological works such as Lewis Henry Morgan’s *Ancient Society* (1877) and Johan Jacob Bachofen’s *Das Mutterrecht* (1861), Engels propounds a theory that monogamy is a recent construct established with the rise of private property as a foundation of capitalism, wherein patrilineal inheritance secures itself for the accumulation of capital through the abolition of group marriage associated with matriarchy: “The overthrow of mother right was the *world historical defeat of the female sex*. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and mere instrument for the production of children” (87 italics original). Engels’s proto-feminist condemnation of capitalist-patriarchy, above all, allowed socialist feminists an insight that both biological and cultural reproduction operating in the supposedly private spheres should be understood as a mode of production in a capitalist political economy, as shown in the oft-quoted passage from the preface to the original edition of *The Origin of the Family*:

According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life. This, again, is of a twofold character: on the one side, the production of the means of existence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species. (36)

Based on Engels's formulation, socialist feminism exposed family as a capitalistic site for the extraction of surplus value based on sexual division of labor: when confined in the family, women are exploited by being forced to engage in unpaid domestic work both in terms of biological reproduction of the labor force of the next generation and the physical, psychological, and sexual maintenance of the breadwinner. As long as women are restricted to household management, they remain exploited by the social system that reproduces sexual inequity for the sake of the expansion of capital. Thus, Engels concludes: "it will be plain that the first condition for the liberation of the wife is to bring the whole female sex back into public industry, and that this in turn demands that the characteristic of the monogamous family as the economic unit of society be abolished" (105).

Biographically, Gilman's liaison with Marxism per se was tangential at most. Gilman did frequently contribute articles to *American Fabian*, a journal championing the Fabian Society's socialist agenda that promoted "cooperative collectivism" based on gradual social change (Lane 230); yet, just as the Fabian Socialist rejected the notion of revolution, Gilman strictly distanced herself from Marxist circles of her time, writing in a letter to her husband George Houghton Gilman: "Can you read Marx? . . . I can't now. Maybe never could" (203). However, Gilman's 1898 work *Women and Economics* as well as the all-women world she envisaged in *Herland* clearly reverberates both with Engels's communist vision and with the subsequent aspiration of the full-fledged socialist feminism in the late twentieth century, forming an acute critique to capitalist-patriarchy in her time.

Fin de siècle America saw a rapid industrial growth, which brought about a historic shift from a productive to a consumer economy. The mechanization of production, as a consequence of its extreme efficiency, resulted in the overproduction of the commodity; only the increase in consumption could solve the problem of oversupply that would hinder the expansion of capital. As Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) shows, modern-day consumption is characterized by its symbolic nature, with its limitless desire for luxuries that are detached from use value. Central to this burgeoning consumer economy was the presence of women. As Veblen expounds, it is a middle-class wife who

has become ceremonial consumers on behalf of the husband, who “applies himself to work with the utmost assiduity” (57). In performing “vicarious consumption” (49), bourgeois women display reputability of the household in place of men. In *Women and Economics*, Gilman presented a critique of the women’s role as consumers; consumption, in her view, is equated with vulnerability that comes from women’s economic dependence to men. In what she calls “sexuo-economic relations,” in which women are exchanged between men as commodities of sexual service—most eminently biological reproduction and sexual maintenance of the husband—they are severed from economic production, systematically trapped in the private family (*Women* 23). Gilman conceptualizes the desire to produce as an instinctual human drive that surpasses the desire to consume: “Economic production is the natural expression of human energy. . . . Socially organized human beings tend to produce, as a gland to secrete. . . . ‘I want to mark!’ cries the child, demanding the pencil. He does not want to eat. He wants to mark. He is not seeking to get something into himself, but to something out of himself” (116-17). In contrast, for modern leisure-class women, Gilman argues, the “natural” instinct to produce is suppressed under an artificially enhanced drive of consumption: “To consume food, to consume clothes, to consume houses and furniture and decorations and ornaments and amusements, to take and take and take forever . . . this is the enforced condition of the mothers of the race” (119). Gilman’s conclusion for women’s liberation from “sexuo-economic relations” shows a striking coincidence with Engels’s: “The family as a social unit makes a ponderous body of somewhat irreconcilable constituents, requiring a sort of military rule to make it work at all” (217). In order to respond to “developing social needs [that] call for an ever-increasing delicacy and freedom in the inter-service and common service of individuals,” the family “dwindle[d] to a monogamic [*sic*] basis” needs to be overthrown.

As Elizabeth Keyser notes, seemingly, in dramatizing her social theory in the novel, Gilman attempts to offer an explanation of the problem of patriarchy conjoined with capitalism “as well as a solution for it,” creating Herland as a “blueprint” for social change (Keyser 44). Clearly, Gilman constructed her feminist dreamland in a stark contrast with capitalist-patriarchy that she calls sexuo-economic structure, the advantage of whose “struggle for existence” the three men vainly try to explain to the citizens of Herland (*Herland* 63). In delineating the social Darwinist model of their society, the narrator ends up confessing that competition as the supposed “stimulus to industry” (61) merely results in creating “an everlasting writhing mass . . . trying to get ahead of one another” (69). Among the victims of the capitalist social structure are women of the lowest class “driven into the

labor market by necessity” and helpless mothers excluded from economic production for the sake of the reproduction of children and sexual maintenance of their husbands (63). In contrast, Herland’s political economy is operated “not by competition, but by united action” (61). Without the concept of private family—for they “are all descended from a common source. . . . all one ‘family’ in reality” (76)—women have developed the system of “close inter-service in the interests of their children” (68). The highly developed collectivized childcare, wherein the professionals specialized in primary education solely take care of the children, enables Herlanders to work in the community for the sake of self-expression of their individual talent.

However, somewhat strangely, Gilman constructed her utopia *not* on the logic of Marxist historical progression from capitalism to communism, but on a kind of anachronism. Unlike her contemporary socialist-novelist Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward* (1887), whose communitarian utopia is set in 2000, Gilman’s utopian fiction does not implant such time difference; Herland embodies the miraculous survival of the matriarchy that must have existed before patriarchal monogamy in her present time, the year 1915. Significantly, the very idea of a nation “built on a sort of matriarchal principle” (*Herland* 9) itself reflects the Victorian anthropologists’ obsession with matriarchy that supposedly existed before patriarchal civilization, upon which Engels based his theory of historical contingency of patriarchal monogamy. Before the actual expedition into Herland, as a sociologist familiar to anthropological discourse, Jennings tries to convince his two friends, who would not believe the existence of the matriarchal society: “This is a condition known to have existed—here’s just a survival. They’ve got some peculiarly isolated valley or tableland up there, and their primeval customs have survived” (9). At the turn of the century United States, the idea of primitive matriarchy permeated the era and was deployed to validate evolutionary legitimacy of patriarchy. An American anthropologist contemporaneous with Gilman, James Weir, warns the atavistic power of matriarchy in his 1895 essay “The Effect of Female Suffrage on Posterity.” Weir, arguing against the anticipated progress of female suffrage, attacks the New Woman movement as a disastrous retrogression into primitive matriarchy: “The danger comes . . . [w]hen woman, owing to her increased degeneration, gives free rein to her atavistic tendencies, and hurries ever backward toward the savage state of her barbarian ancestors. I see, in the establishment of equal rights, the first step toward that abyss of immoral horrors so repugnant to our cultivated ethical tastes—the matriarchate” (Weir 825). Gilman’s endeavor in *Herland* to envision “New Women” as a “new race” generated through parthenogenetic matriarchy is a fictional acting out of the return of the

repressed atavistic tendency that Victorian anthropologist tried to entomb in the past (*Herland* 58).

Inevitably, an attempt to revisit Gilman's anachronistic socialist feminist fantasy entails another anachronism, trying to resurrect socialist feminism's now seemingly obsolete ideals in a "post-communist, post-industrial, post-feminist world of de-centered subjects and fluctuating identities" (Bryson 14). As Valerie Bryson puts it, the very term, socialist feminism, may sound today "politically out-dated and philosophically naïve," when more than two decades have passed since the end of the Cold War (14). In the wake of the collapse of socialist countries, the transition from capitalist to socialist society Marxists once predicted has been haunting us as an unfulfilled prophecy; seemingly, all-encompassing capitalism has manifested its immortality by proving its historic alternatives unviable; overthrow of monogamous kinship once dreamed of has yet to come: simply put, we learned that utopia was not "around the corner." The question arises here: what is the conceptual purchase of trying to reanimate the socialist feminist fantasy in a postmodern world? Put another way, the awkward question this paper asks would be: how can we possibly regain the lost, or to be more precise, the never-achieved paradise that socialist feminists envisioned?

However, not despite of, but precisely because of its unavailability, the never-achieved paradise becomes another name for utopia. The word *utopia* itself puns on "ou (after the Greek for 'no') and eu (after the Greek for 'good')," which are combined with *topus* that means "place" in Greek (Kessler 7). Put together, the word signifies the "ideal 'no place' of the imagination, the possible 'good place,' better than the author's current society" (7 italics added). In other words, utopia is not the "blueprint" for a future—its political valence lies not in its prescriptive capacity to foresee a better society that would replace the here and now; rather, it is a medium that would gear us to desire alternate social systems by having us realize the quagmire of the present. In this sense, to use Fredric Jameson's phrasing, "the proper function of . . . themes [of utopia] [lies] in critical negativity" (211). For Jameson, utopian impulse is the inextinguishable desire for the negation of the myth of capitalism's immortality. Put differently, utopia looms before us only in a form of the double negative, which negates anti-utopianism that endorses the status quo and the immobilized future as its extension.

In *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, José Esteban Muñoz calls this utopianism's double negative impulse "anti-antiutopianism": "anti-antiutopianism is not about a merely affirmative or positive investment in utopia"; rather, it is a speculative

resistance to the “reactionary posture” that stifles a critical imagination operating against the heteronormative matrix (14). What is at stake in utopianism is a “potentiality” as opposed to a possibility: “Unlike a possibility, a thing that simply might happen, a potentiality is a certain mode of nonbeing that is eminent, a thing that is present but not actually existing” (Muñoz 9). If a possibility gestures toward a feasible future as a continuation of the present, the double negative impulse of utopia does not take the side of a possibility as that which designates future in a positive form; instead, the potentiality of utopia would complicate the straight temporality that imagines the linear progression from the past to the present to the future. For, as Judith Halberstam notes, the linear conceptualization of time itself is complicit with the heteronormative structure of capitalism that is “organized according to the logic of capital accumulation” in the form of the private family (7): it is the domination of “the time of inheritance,” a “generational time within which values, wealth, goods, and morals are passed through family ties from one generation to the next” (5). Then, if we are to capture the glimmer of potentiality of utopia, it is essential to step “out of the linearity of straight time,” which entombs the past as the immovable foundation of the present riveted in the linear progression of history conceived by the rhetoric of generational reproduction (Muñoz 25). Daring to commit an anachronism, therefore, is quintessential in topographic endeavor to map a utopian potentiality that disrupts the linear trajectory of straight time. In Gilman’s socialist feminist critique of the family that has been rendered the relic of the past—the somewhat enigmatic title of the first chapter of *Herland*, “A Not Unnatural Enterprise,” seems to resonate with the double-negative impulse of utopianism—there might be a utopian potentiality of double-negative impulse that vacates the here and now of heteronormative capitalism.

In order to seek the anachronistic topography of Gilman’s utopia, we need to revisit the quagmire of the author’s here-and-now, upon which she constructed *Herland* as its negative. By the time Gilman wrote *Herland*, the Progressive Era witnessed the large-scale marriage reform that increasingly buttressed the normativity of heterosexual monogamy. As Elizabeth Freeman notes, one of the most eminent instances of “governmental crackdown on affinal forms” can be found in the abolition of polygamy practiced both by Native Americans and Mormons (“Family” 637). Native Americans “were allocated ‘federal’ (stolen) property only if they formed monogamous male-headed households” (638). Likewise, the nation-wide accusation against Mormonism’s practice of plural marriage culminated in *Reynolds v. United States* in 1878, wherein the Supreme Court ruled that religious duty was not a suitable defense for practicing polygamy (Bushman 97). As a result

of the repeated seizure of church assets by Congress, Mormons officially renounced polygamy in September 1890, which finally allowed Utah to enter into U.S. statehood. As Freeman further points out, these antipolygamy movements were in tandem with capitalist agenda, which aimed to obliterate “communalism, to divide and privatize . . . collectively owned and maintained property” (638).

Significantly, the legal buttress of monogamy was concurrent with the growing cultural prominence of the concept of gender in the United States. As Michael Kimmel points out, “at the turn of the century, *manhood* was replaced gradually by the term *masculinity*” (81). *Manhood*, often contrasted with *childhood*, was defined by moral and physiological capacity; the emergent concept, *masculinity*, in contrast, “referred to a set of behavioral traits and attitudes that were contrasted now with a new opposite, *femininity*.” Defined only in relation to each other, femininity and masculinity were “something that had to be constantly demonstrated, the attainment of which was forever in question.” As the proliferation of magazine industry for both female and male cultures would suggest, Kimmel further argues, these gender identities were to be constantly purchased through the newly formed consumer capitalism, which Gilman condemned in *Women and Economics*.

Such concurrence between regulation of monogamous family and normative reproduction of gender through consumer capitalism, however, is by no means accidental. Recollecting the socialist feminist’s theoretical formulation to regard sexual reproduction as a mode of production in the political economy, Judith Butler points to the potential affinity between Marxist critique of family and performative understanding of gender: “[socialist feminism] sought to show how the reproduction as part of the *material* condition of gendered persons, of ‘men’ and ‘women,’ depended on the social regulation of the family and, indeed, on the reproduction of the heterosexual family as a site for the reproduction of heterosexual persons fit for entry into the family as social form” (“Merely Cultural” 272). Drawing on Rubin’s “Traffic,” Butler argues that the sexual division of labor in heterosexual monogamy could not be understood apart from the reproduction of gendered persons.

Envisioned as the negative of her time, Gilman’s socialist-feminist utopia is devoid of the concepts of expansion of capital and monogamous private family; as a consequence, the citizens of the nation inevitably lack the notion of gender as well, as if to attest the mutual constitutiveness of capital, monogamous private family, and normative gender roles. On the most basic level, the plot of *Herland* chronicles the way in which the narrator gradually unlearns the normative gender arrangement instilled in capitalist-patriarchy, inculcated instead with its relationality and performativity. As an initiation ritual into the



gender-neutral world of Herland, the three men involuntarily undergo an act of gender-bending, in which they experience the gender as a matter of positionality. Captured in their attempt of colonial expedition by Herlanders, the three men find themselves in “the position of the Suffragette trying to get to the parliament buildings through a triple cordon of London police. . . struggling manfully, but held secure most womanfully” (25). Conceived as a positional and thus relational arrangement, femininity embodied by the Suffragette here is represented as occupiable for anyone regardless of biological sex. Throughout the novel, the male visitors are repeatedly educated into this positionality/relationality of gender. When they wake up from anesthesia, they find their belongings—toothbrushes, combs, notebooks, and watches—intact, except that their clothes are confiscated. Deprived of the clothes that would enable them to perform their masculinity, they are provided with clothes similar to the ones Herlanders wear, which consist of a one-piece cotton undergarment and knee length tunics. Contrary to the three men’s home country where women dress for enhancing their symbolic/exchange value in “sexuo-economic relations,” Herlanders dress solely for the purpose of utility. The narrator finds the garment “simple in the extreme, and absolutely comfortable, physically,” but at the same time feels “like supes in the theater” (28). Clad in the “nondescript clothes,” he is no longer allowed to perform his masculine gender, as if he were a supernumerary in the play. Through communication with the women devoid of “what [they] had always thought essentially feminine” as a consequence of two thousand years of isolation from men (59), Jennings comes to a strikingly performative understanding of gender: “those ‘feminine charms’ we are so fond of are not feminine at all, but mere reflected masculinity” (60).

Apparently, the gender-less world of Herland dissolves the concept of sexuality in a somewhat troubling way. In order to further improve their already perfect society, Herlanders develop interests in heterosexual reproduction, which they think would benefit the diversification of their population. With the Herlanders’ tactful scheme, the three men fall in love with three girls—Ellador, Celis, and Alima. The entire society watches the courtship of the three couples—like a caricature of the Foucauldian biopower that regulates the subjects from within through sexuality—for the outcome of the experiment could mark their return to what they call a “bi-sexual race” (56). During their courtship, however, the men find out that Herlanders do not understand the concept of romantic love and sexuality, or, desire for non-procreative sexual intercourse. The absence of any “sex-tradition,” or gender assignment of the “accepted standard of what was ‘manly’ and what was ‘womanly’” makes it impossible for the men to appeal to Herlanders’ “sex-feeling” (93). In an attempt to

explain the function of non-procreative intercourse to Ellador, Jennings betrays the complicity between capitalism and compulsory heterosexuality embodied in a form of private family: “the sweet intense joy of married lovers” would “result in higher stimulus to all creative work,” which helps the accumulation of capital within private family (125). However, again, in the world devoid of the concepts of expansion of capital and monogamous family, sexuality as a drive for accumulation of capital does not find a place to exist.

Gilman’s understanding of sexuality—or refusal thereof—seems to imply her backwardness in terms of sexual politics that directs itself toward celebrating the multiplicity of desire as liberation. In Gilman’s utopia, sexual acts seem to be framed strictly in terms of utility embodied by reproductive heterosexuality, allowed to exist only in their relation to biological reproduction. Under Gilman’s persistent association between female sexuality and motherhood is her aversion to the market economy in which women’s sexuality becomes commodity to be exchanged—or, to use Gilman’s phrasing, sexuo-economic relations in which “he is the market, the demand; [s]he is the supply” (*Women* 86). In her reading of *Women and Economics*, Margit Stange points out that Gilman, through advocating motherhood, demonstrates that “the very qualities that debase modern women—her sexualization as a commodity, her greed and parasitism as a consumer—uphold market society with its cooperative system of production for exchange” (Stange 10). For Gilman, sexuality of women is always already invested in capitalist market economy. As commodities exchanged in the market, women are forced to engage in anti-maternal endeavors, for maternity diminishes “the personal charms” of women: “It is through the sex relation minus its natural consequence that she profits most; and, therefore, the force of economic advantage acts against maternity instead of toward it” (Gilman 171). In other words, conflation of female sexuality and reproduction is but the other side of the same coin of the abhorrence to consumer capitalism separated out from production.

In this sense, as Lee-Wen Chang notes, ironically, Gilman seems to retrogressively sacrifice female sexuality for the sake of women’s liberation from sexuo-economic relations: “Siding herself with contemporary male scientists, Gilman viewed female sexuality as synonymous with reproduction and maintained that women can only loosen the sexual-economic relation if they use sex purely for reproduction” (Chang 338). Needless to say, what Chang refers to here is the proliferation of sexology around the turn of the century. As Michel Foucault famously delineates in *The History of Sexuality*, contrary to the repressive hypothesis, knowledge about sex was increasingly formulated as a discourse

around this time. As is exemplified by the expansion of sexology, sex became an object of scientific scrutiny and public debate in the latter half of the nineteenth century. As the opening sentence of Richard von Krafft-Ebing's pioneering work of sexology, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886) shows, the discourse of sexuality was, apparently, first and foremost designed to underwrite the centrality of procreation: "The propagation of the human race is . . . guaranteed by the hidden laws of nature which are enforced by mighty, irresistible impulse. Sensual enjoyment and physical fitness are not the only conditions for the enforcement of these laws, but higher motives and aims, such as the desire to continue the species or the individuality of mental and physical qualities beyond time and space" (Krafft-Ebing 1). Sexologists uniformly define sexual desire external to procreative impulse as "sexual perversion," thereby creating a discourse of sexuality as that which centered on procreative instinct.

Yet, what is at stake here is, as Foucault states, whether that which concerns itself with procreation or not, the very concept of sexuality itself is a historical construct; born around the turn of the century, sexuality was first and foremost conceived as a discourse that would objectify, regulate, and formulate what should be regarded as "sexual" by classifying various activities that generate bodily pleasures. Furthermore, it is the family, in Foucault's formulation, that is the "most active site of deployment of sexuality" (109). The seeming absence of sexuality embedded in the monogamous family in *Herland*, seen in this light, can be interpreted as the refusal to partake in the very discourse of sexuality, which has persuaded the modern epoch to believe that sex "has become more important than our soul, more important almost than our life" (156). What is truly regressive about Gilman's sexual politics is, then, not her sacrifice of female sexuality, but her desire to fictionally regress into the age *before* sexuality, where pleasure was not differentiated as "sexual" and "non-sexual."

Economy of pleasure in *Herland* operates not in terms of sexuality, but in terms of Eros: to use Herbert Marcuse's terminology in *Eros and Civilization* (1966)—another instance of utopian aspiration imbued with Marxism—what is represented in *Herland* is the "conceptual transformation of sexuality into Eros" (205). For Marcuse, sexuality culminating in the "genital supremacy" comes into being only at the cost of the repression of Eros, or polymorphous perversion in Freudian terminology, which is supposed to exist in childhood. In this imagined original state, the whole body is experienced as a huge erogenous zone (48). The organization of sexuality, in contrast, centralizes bodily pleasures on certain bodily parts, not exclusively but largely around genital areas, thereby

de-eroticizing the rest of the body. In a similar vein, the monogamous family, which is designated as *the* primary site of bodily pleasures congealed as sexuality, de-eroticizes the rest of the social body, disabling us to imagine pleasure outside the sphere of the private family. To regain the original totality of Eros that is supposed to have existed before the arrangement of sexuality, it is essential to “*regress* behind the attained level of civilized rationality,” which would require “a disintegration of the institutions in which the private interpersonal relations have been organized, particularly the monogamic and patriarchal family” (198, 201 italics original).

What Gilman attempts to represent through the narrator’s experience in his relationship to Ellador is this regression from sexuality to Eros, which re-cathectes the whole society as an erogenous zone. Although at first frustrated by his stifled sexual desire, the narrator gradually experiences what he names “a queer feeling”: “way down deep, as of the stirring of *some ancient dim prehistoric consciousness*, a feeling that they were right somehow—that this was the way to feel. It was like—coming home to mother” (*Herland* 139; italics added). Regressing into a metaphorical childhood in the relationship to Ellador, Jennings unlearns sexuality, finding that “an apparently imperative demand had disappeared without [his] noticing of it” (126). In a “deep, restful feeling” (101) generated from his relationship to Ellador, he comes to a realization that what is “supposed to be a physiological necessity was a psychological necessity” (127). Instead of sexuality as pleasure solidified on sexed organs, Ellador leads Jennings to the “multitude of . . . satisfaction” in every dimension of his social life: “It was as if I had come to some new place and people, with a desire to eat at all hours, and no other interests in particular, and as if my hosts, instead of merely saying, ‘You shall not eat,’ had presently aroused in me a lively desire for music, for pictures, for running some ingenious machine” (128).

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Jennings and Ellador’s relationship to each other filled with comfort and pleasure can be straightforwardly nameable neither in the narrator’s society organized around gender and sexuality nor in Herlander’s social organization solely based on mother-child-sister relationship: “it phrased itself in their minds in terms of friendship, the one purely personal love they knew . . . Visibly we were not mothers, not children, nor compatriots; so they if they loved us, we must be friends” (97). Their “friendship” strangely resembles what Foucault describes a homosexual relationship between two men of different ages in his 1981 interview, “Friendship as a Way of Life”:

Between a man and a younger woman, the marriage institution makes it easier: she accepts it and makes it work. But two men of noticeably different ages—what code would allow them to communicate? They face each other without terms or convenient words, with nothing to assure them about the meaning of the movement that carries them toward each other. They have to invent, from A to Z, a relationship that is still formless, which is friendship: that is to say, the sum of everything through which they can give each other pleasure. (156)

What horrifies the public, Foucault further notes, is not the possible sexual act between two men—when imagined as highly sexual, relationship between two men is rather easily accommodated in the public consciousness organized through the discourse of sexuality; what is truly disturbing about such relationship, instead, is “affection, tenderness, friendship, fidelity, camaraderie, and companionship, things that our rather sanitized society can’t allow a place for without fearing the formation of new alliances and the tying together of unforeseen lines of force” (156). By cancelling out gender and sexuality increasingly formed in tandem of capitalist-patriarchy buttressed by monogamy in her time, thereby imagining the “before” of their formation, Gilman opens up in *Herland* a potentiality in which a new form of alliance is realized. However, I would hasten to add that there is and should be no material evidence for such anteriority—be it matriarchy, gender-less society, or erotic totality, they are all the product of our anachronistic imagination. In an attempt to materialize these “befores,” delineating a linear trajectory from that ideal past as a process of the fall from the paradise, we will again consign ourselves to the trap of “straight time.” Instead, what specters of Marxist historiography and Gilman’s anachronistic utopia would tell us is that regardless of whether it actually existed or not, to envision a past that could have existed before can generate the desire to negate the anti-utopianism. Refusing simply to reinstall the cultural corpses into a linear history, invoking and living with their ghosts in the present—that probably is the endeavor of topography of utopia.

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## 時代錯誤の地形学：『ハーランド』におけるユートピアの潜在性

岸 まどか

本稿は、シャーロット・パーキンス・ギルマンのフェミニスト・ユートピア小説『ハーランド』（1915）を読み直すことで、性器的関係と単婚的家族関係の外部に位置する親密性を実現するユートピアの潜在性を問うことを目的とする。作家がその到来を世紀転換期に予見した社会主義フェミニズムの1970年代の興隆から半世紀が経とうとする現在、ギルマンのファンタジーを改めて読み直し、社会主義フェミニズムの家父長主義的資本主義からの脱却という見果てぬ夢に寄り添おうとすることは一見、時代錯誤に外ならない。しかし、ユートピアがその定義上、到達しえぬ場、存在せぬ場であるのならば、ユートピアの有為性とは、未来のどこかに位置する目指すべき確かな可能性や過去にあった失われた理想郷としてではなく、「今、ここ」の限界をあぶり出す潜勢的陰画として、我々を無力化する「現在」の軛を逃れようという欲望を誘起することにある。それゆえ本論は、生物学的再生産に仮託された過去から未来へと直線的に前進する時間軸——ストレイト・タイム——に抗い、時代錯誤の快樂に与しながら、作家の「現在」としての世紀転換期の陰画が逆照射するハーランドへの失われた地図を作成することを目指す。