

现代外语教学研究著作丛书

黄芙蓉 著

**MEMORY, HERITAGE AND RECONSTRUCTION:
ON ETHNIC IDENTITY OF CHINESE AMERICANS
IN MAXINE HONG KINGSTON'S WORKS**

记忆、传承与重构 论汤亭亭小说中族裔身份构建



哈尔滨工业大学出版社
HARBIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PRESS

BOOK REVIEW

RETHINKING UNCONSTRUCTION: ON THE DEATH OF CHINESE WORKERS IN NORTH AMERICAN CITIES

REBECCA L. JOHNSON AND JAMES L. HARRIS

现代外语教学研究著作丛书

黄芙蓉 著

MEMORY, HERITAGE AND RECONSTRUCTION:
ON ETHNIC IDENTITY OF CHINESE AMERICANS
IN MAXINE HONG KINGSTON'S WORKS

记忆、传承与重构——论汤亭亭小说中族裔身份构建

哈尔滨工业大学出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

记忆、传承与重构:论汤亭亭小说中族裔身份构建:英文/
黄芙蓉著. —哈尔滨:哈尔滨工业大学出版社,2008.12
(现代外语教学研究著作丛书)
ISBN 978-7-5603-2500-2

I.记… II.黄… III.汤亭亭-小说-文学研究-英文
IV.I712.074

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2008)第 144230 号

责任编辑 孙 杰

出版发行 哈尔滨工业大学出版社

社 址 哈尔滨市南岗区复华四道街 10 号 邮编 150006

传 真 0451-86414749

网 址 <http://hitpress.hit.edu.cn>

印 刷 黑龙江省地质测绘印制中心印刷厂

开 本 850mm×1168mm 1/32 印张 6.75 字数 185 千字

版 次 2009 年 1 月第 1 版 2009 年 1 月第 1 次印刷

书 号 ISBN 978-7-5603-2500-2

定 价 26.00 元

(如因印装质量问题影响阅读,我社负责调换)

序 言

在撰写这篇序言的时候,消息传来,美国声望最高的两个文学大奖之一——2008年美国全国图书奖评选尘埃落定,其中分量最重的杰出文学贡献奖,亦称终身成就奖,授给了作家汤亭亭。各大报纸都刊登了这位飘着一头白发的美籍华裔女性的照片。这是汤亭亭,也是美国华裔文学取得的一个不凡的成就。此时我们有幸读到黄芙蓉对这令人尊敬的老作家的研究著作,真是十分荣幸。

我国的外国文学研究中,华裔作家,尤其是美国华裔作家历来颇受关注。由于华裔作家与我们的文化渊源,也由于他们的双重身份所体现和代表的文化融合和文化冲突,他们的作品具有特殊的阐释价值。他们得到双重文化的滋养,但又受到双重归属的牵扯,常常面临情感挣扎,既有融入主流社会的愿望和需要,也有文化对抗与寻根的冲动。但是文化负担可以成为文化财富,对于美籍华裔作家来说,他们独特的情感经历,他们漫长的文化苦旅,可以积淀和转化为丰富的文学想象的资源。由于中西文化之间的巨大差异,在表现文化身份的矛盾性、复杂性和典型性方面,华裔作家具有得天独厚的优势。落差愈大,碰撞愈烈,体验愈深,愈能产生出具有深刻意义的文学作品。

今天的美国文坛倡导文化多元和价值多元,这为少数族裔文学的迅速滋长提供了良好的气候条件。人们更期待听到长期受到压制的主流话语之外的声音,于是配角走到了前台的强光灯下,边缘变成了中心,华裔文学与黑人文学、犹太文学等一起,共同组成了当代美国文学中最亮丽、最值得关注的一部分。美国的华裔文学值得关注,是因为在某些特定表现领域,它具有不可替代的代表意义和广阔的阐释空间。华裔作家的作品为文学和文化研究者提供了有趣而值得深入考究的个案。

在美国华裔作家群中,汤亭亭是佼佼者。她的主要作品,比如

关于文化冲突的《女勇士》、叙述华裔历史的《中国佬》和表达“多元主义”理想的《孙行者》，在美国赢得了众多的读者和主流文学中的地位。这些作品都已有中文译本，也受到我国读者的欢迎和评论界的热议。但此前对汤亭亭作品的研究，大多没有突破文化冲突和女性主义几个方面的讨论。其实，汤亭亭的文学作品包含丰富，可以从更多方面进行解读。黄芙蓉的研究独辟蹊径，主要从两方面入手：一方面讨论汤亭亭作品中美国华人历史与身份问题，另一方面讨论其作品的叙事策略与手段，而这两部分，是表现主题与表现形式，又融合成为有机的一体。

汤亭亭在作品中让华裔先辈“复活”，讲述他们建设美国的故事，强调他们的历史贡献，重写被主流历史刻意忽略的篇章，以此反抗美国主流叙事中对华裔的抹煞与歪曲。说到底，历史学家和小说家的目标，都是试图理解过去的经验，做出自己的表达。不管素材是确实发生的事件，还是想象的，不管写的是历史还是小说，一个作者的目标是通过对过去的阐释，与当前、与他自己、与他周围的环境达成和谐。历史存在于文献，以及文献与文献的关联之中。这种关联并不是文献固有的，而是由作者构想产生。这方面，史学家和小说作家的制作过程是相像的，都是通过排除、选择和串联，形成有意义的能自圆其说的文本。历史和小说作者都是“作”“者”，在法语中，小说和历史是同一个单词。因此，我们说汤亭亭的小说具有主流话语的颠覆功能，能够重新表述华裔历史。

汤亭亭的小说关注华人的历史和历史塑成的美国华人身份，三方面特征显而易见。第一，华裔的历史是通过个人化进行表述的，比如从某一家族成员的观察视角来发现家族史的某一侧面，而这一家族的境遇又折射出历史进程的某个特征，可供放大观察。第二，华裔的历史是通过内化表达的，比如历史的压迫和歧视，在汤亭亭的小说中常常表现为人物不合常情的行为举止。第三，华裔的历史是通过象征表达的，需要读者参与解读。她的小说不是纪实的、具体的、基于历史的，而是原创的、独立的、表达概念的，是

对美国华裔生活经验领域感受到的那些最根本的东西加以咀嚼消化,融会贯通后重新整合,以故事形式表达的。通过想象性的写作,汤亭亭揭示了种族与文化平等口号背后的现实。

黄芙蓉的研究特别强调了汤亭亭小说的两个方面,其一是中国传统文化渊源,如古典小说对作家本人与小说人物的影响,包括中华古代经典弘扬的精神和采用的叙事模式。汤亭亭尤其将章回小说和口承叙事的成分,借用来叙说自己的故事。其二是非文字记载的历史文本在建构和解构历史方面的作用,如照片、电影、传播载体等,如何曾与主流话语“合作共谋”,又如何被作家用来重新解读华裔的历史和身份。黄芙蓉的研究避开讨论直接的文化冲撞,而集中讨论受主流话语操控的辅助的、间接的文化系统,详细解析其中的政治编码,观察其对族裔群体产生同化作用。比如,汤亭亭在小说中通过对家藏照片的阐释、对主流电影中的华人形象的分析,道出了不同版本的华裔历史。

黄芙蓉的研究从新角度更加深入地挖掘了汤亭亭作品的社会和历史意义。她在文中指出:“对于汤亭亭来说,书写家族历史并将其与整个族裔历史联系起来是构建少数族裔话语,对抗主流话语的一种方式。她的写作代表了少数族裔女性作家在两个世界、两种文化中间寻求生存空间的挣扎和困惑。”黄芙蓉研究充分吸收和借鉴了前人研究的成果,进行了深入细致的文本分析,借助文化研究的方法,对汤亭亭的小说作品进行视角独特的评价,提出了自己独到的观点,帮助我们加深对这位重要作家的理解,并通过她,更深刻地理解整个美国华裔文学中许多带共性的主要特征。

虞建华

2008年10月于上海外国语大学

前 言

20 世纪后半期,美国社会中的民权运动风起云涌,引发了思想价值和行为价值多元化的倾向,各种哲学思潮和文学批评理论相继涌现,少数族裔文学获得了空前的发展。在此背景下,华裔美国文学经历了前所未有的繁荣,并在过去几十年中,成为不可忽视的文本和新生力量,促进了当代美国文化多元化以及文本多种族化。基于双重文化背景中的独特经历和对历史的寻根需要,华裔作家对自己的族群在美国的生活经历、情感挣扎、身份构建等方面做了生动的描写,对历史进行了再叙述,并试图以此来认同中美双重文化,从而构建自我、冲破美国文学中白人主导经典的藩篱。在美国华裔作家群体中,汤亭亭无疑是最杰出的作家之一。无论是最具影响力的《女勇士》、还是叙述华裔历史的《中国佬》、乃至表达“多元主义”理想的《孙行者》,都为她赢得了经典作家的地位。但是,对于汤亭亭作品的评价,尤其是针对她对中华文化和中国古典文学的挪用、改编以及对自传体文本形式的突破,在国内外学术界一直存有争议。目前,对汤亭亭作品的研究大多集中在种族学、人类学、跨文化和女性主义等方面。深入解读汤亭亭的作品,可以发现,她的作品除了在表现人物、讲述故事等方面独具魅力之外,更蕴含着深刻的社会和现实意义。对汤亭亭作品的全面解读,需要从理论高度分析作品中的艺术表现手法;同时,又要基于传统研究领域的成果,从新的角度深入地挖掘其作品的社会及历史意义。

本书一个重要的理论支撑是将文化作为一个有无数子系统的系统,无时无刻不在潜移默化地影响身处其中的个体。后现代理论中,文化的表现形式不局限于语言系统,它还包括各种媒体和媒介。法国学者罗兰·巴特认为,文化作用于个体的形式包括照片、影院、新闻报道、体育等等。这些文化系统的表现形式成为文化的子系统,被用来规约文化系统中个体的思想、世界观和行为方式。

在这一理论框架下,本书分析汤亭亭的作品中华裔美国人的身份认证问题。探讨她的小说是如何通过人物关系、情节发展、写作手法等揭示文化系统对人物身份构建的意义和作用方式,进而推及美国社会中华裔族群的身份构建问题。

因此,本书将文化理论与媒介、历史、意识形态结合,分析汤亭亭的文本中华裔男性身份构建问题。个体的身份构建取决于多种因素。从社会历史背景、个人文化背景、种族特征以及个体与社团的关系几个方面入手,分析汤亭亭文本中这些线索是如何决定其小说人物的身份构建的,推而广之,了解少数族裔男性身份构建中的种种关键因素。

本书在吸收和借鉴前人研究成果的基础上,为汤亭亭的作品及华裔文学研究提出了较新观点,为今后此方面的深入研究奠定了一定的基础。

因作者水平有限,难免有疏漏之处,望同行学者不吝赐教。

黄芙蓉
2008年10月于哈工大

Contents

Chapter 1	An Overview of Chinese American Literature	(1)
1.1	General Overview of Chinese Americans in the U.S.	(3)
1.2	The Emergency and Exuberance of Chinese American Literature	(5)
1.3	Maxine Hong Kingston as the Leading Figure of Chinese American Literature	(6)
1.4	Studies on Maxine Hong Kingston's Works	(9)
1.5	The Identity Politics in Kingston's Works	(10)
Chapter 2	Fictionalized History: Historical Writing as Counter-discourse	(14)
2.1	Ethnic History and Individual Identity	(16)
2.2	Photography and Minority Historical Documentation	(18)
2.3	Kingston's Fictionalized Account of Her Ethnic History	(21)
2.4	Manipulation of the Whites and the Absence of the Chinese Americans	(24)
2.5	The History of Chinese Americans and the Personal Photos—A Past Deliberately Forgotten	(30)
2.6	Photos as a Means of Propaganda—The Demonized Chinese American	(35)
Chapter 3	The Pressure of Assimilation—Movie as the Message	(42)
3.1	The Magnified Physical Features—The Interaction between Ethnical Identity and Screen Image	(44)
3.2	The Cinematic Depictions of Chinese Americans and the Effects	(45)

3.3	The Impulse of Imitation and the Pressure of Assimilation— The Semiotic Persuasion	(54)
3.4	The Interplay of Ethnicity and Gender and Its Effect on the Identity Formation	(60)
Chapter 4	Breaking the Silence—Oral Narrative in Kingston's Texts	(75)
4.1	The Significance of Story-telling	(77)
4.2	The Inheritance and Reinvention of Chinese Traditional Oral Culture	(79)
4.3	The Features of Oral Narrative-interactiveness and Participativeness	(80)
4.4	The Imitation of Oral Narrative Structure in <i>China Men</i>	(83)
4.5	The Omniscient Motherly Narrator—Guanyin	(90)
4.6	The Texts Full of Sounds and Fury	(99)
Chapter 5	Pear Garden in the West	(114)
5.1	Theater as the Convergence of Heterogeneous Discourses	(116)
5.2	Theater as the Identity-shaping Force	(119)
5.3	Chinese Story-telling Tradition as the Journey Back	(123)
5.4	Theater as a Sign of Cultural Regeneration	(125)
5.5	Theater as the Communal Effort	(134)
Chapter 6	Conclusions	(150)
Notes	(156)
Appendices	(158)
References	(199)

An Overview of Chinese American Literature

『本章导读』

华裔文学历史回顾

本章简述了本书的理论框架以及论述脉络,回顾了华裔文学在美国社会发展中的历史过程,以及华裔在美国主流话语中的形象;简述了在华裔文学中,汤赵之争中呈现的两种对立的观点与争论;分析了文化的具体化形式:照片、电影、信息传播方式以及剧场,上述方式作为信息传播系统带给系统中的个体以归属感和集体认同感。

MEMORY, HERITAGE AND RECONSTRUCTION: ON ETHNIC IDENTITY
OF CHINESE AMERICANS IN MAXINE HONG KINGSTON'S WORKS

Citizens inhabit the political space of the nation, a space that is, at once, juridically legislated, territorially situated, and culturally embodied. Although the law is perhaps the discourse that most literally governs citizenship, U. S. national culture—the collectively forged images, histories, and narratives that place, displace, and replace individuals in relation to the national polity—powerfully shapes who the citizenry is, where they dwell, what they remember, and what they forget. (Lowe, 1996:2)

1.1 General Overview of Chinese Americans in the U.S.

In the history of the United States of America, Chinese Americans have been subjected to violence, exclusion and discrimination over many years. They were represented in several stereotypes, from celestials, yellow peril, greedy miners, redundant laborers, to allies as opposed to the Japanese Americans during World War Two, and finally, in the modern times as the model minority. Although the word "model" connotes a positive note which is absent in the previous damning stereotypes, the word still expresses an undertone of unassimilability. The Asiatic "unassimilability" is the stereotyping process, which is defined by Gotanda as "Asiatic racialization"—a process conflating Asian Americans with Asian citizens and perceiving them as a threat to the American nation (Gotanda, 1999:1 - 2).

On the contrary, the European immigrants can assimilate into American society by "shedding their past, their ethnicity—the language, customs, dress, and culture of the old country. Physically indistinguishable from old-stock whites in America, they were able to blend into the society of their adopted country" (Takaki, 1989:12). However, Chinese Americans are marked as a separate group because of the differences in their appearances and are reduced to cheap laborers and subhuman disqualified as American citizens.

The disfranchisement was the consequence of the prevalent American legal discourse, which has constructed citizenship around skin color or even tones of skin color, echoing the constructedness of citizenship in the prologue. The Naturalization Law of 1790 had specified that naturalized citizenship was to be reserved for "whites,"

*MEMORY, HERITAGE AND RECONSTRUCTION: ON ETHNIC IDENTITY
OF CHINESE AMERICANS IN MAXINE HONG KINGSTON'S WORKS*

which remained in effect until 1922 (Takaki, 1989:15). Citizenship had been barred to Chinese immigrants until the repeal acts of 1943-1952 when China became an American ally in WWII. Citizenship is a status that, in the case of the United States, inherently linked to masculinity as contended in the writing of Lisa Lowe: "the 'masculinity' of the citizen was first inseparable from his 'whiteness,' as the state extended citizenship to nonwhite male persons, it formally designated these subjects as 'male,' as well" (Lowe, 1996: 11). Specifically, laws were issued in 1882, 1884, and 1888 that explicitly expressed anti-immigration policies against the Chinese, the passing of which signaled repeated denial of the masculinity of Chinese American males. During the booming years of the economy, thousands of able-bodied and willing Chinese were welcome as cheap laborers to the United States. Between the 1840s and 1870s, when large amount of laborers were needed, they joined the labor force in Hawaiian sugar cane plantations and cross-continental railroad building in mainland United States. However, when mines were exhausted, the railroad completed, and the laborers abundant in the market, these Chinese Americans were singled out as undesirable aliens and scapegoat of social problems.

As a result, the whole series of exclusion laws and miscegenation laws led to a conspicuous absence of wives and the emergence of the "bachelor societies" which consisted of single Chinese men in various Chinatowns all over the American West until the middle of the 20th century. According to Huntley, the laws also produced "an aging male Asian population in the Western states, and inspired in China a thriving black-market industry in fraudulent immigration documents" (Huntley, 2001: 44). Many Chinese entered the United States as "paper son" or "paper daughter" ¹. Consequent to the legal denial of

their citizenship and forced bachelorhood, their identity has been discursively produced in the cultural regime as asexual and servile workers in laundries and restaurants. The exclusion of Chinese Americans from citizenship and the stereotypical construction of the group were the very process to emasculate them.

1.2 The Emergency and Exuberance of Chinese American Literature

Comparing with the long immigrant history, the literature of Chinese Americans has, however, experienced a hard and protracted birth. *Fifth Chinese Daughter* by Jade Snow Wong possibly the first work widely recognized by writers of Chinese American descent, announced in 1940s the emergence of a literature of Chinese American making². Only after the civil rights movement, did the era of Chinese American Literature truly began. Many American writers of Chinese descent come to the critics' attention, most notably, Maxine Hong Kingston, Frank Chin, Amy Tan, Gish Gen and David Hwang etc.

One of the events of significance to Chinese American Literature is the publication of the first anthology of Asian American literature, *Äüüüüü! An Anthology of Asian-American Writer*, which is seen as the inception of a real Asian American literature. Although the concepts put forth in the introduction by the editors such as Frank Chin are controversial, inciting heated debates after its publication, the views however "represent the first clear articulation of the possibilities of a Chinese American literary identity" (Wong, 1997:40).

The debates became even more intense with the publication of *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*³, another signaling event in American literary history. One camp led by Frank Chin,

followed by a few sinologists or scholars whose researches focused on China and her history, politics and culture, narrowed the scope of Asian American and Asian American literature, stressing on “cultural nationalism and American nativity”. The other one, headed by Maxine Hong Kingston, the author of the aforementioned book, argued for the opposite course, in defense of legitimacy to appropriate resources from Chinese culture. The argument has “informed and shaped the character and direction of Asian American literature—and to a certain extent, Asian American Studies—since the late 1970s” (Huntley, 2001:40). The discussion ended with the triumph of the critics on the side of Kingston. The event was concluded by Mackin in 2005, “[t]he criticism has been nearly unanimous in its preference for Kingston and its rejection of Chin, favoring her as an author whose postmodern style offers a template for ‘performative’ Chinese Americanness as a multiply determined identity” (Mackin, 2005: 512).

As the leading figure of Chinese American literature, Kingston's works have inspired intense discussion among readers, reviewers, and academic critics. In order to understand the impact of Kingston's work, we need to have a brief look at her background and major works.

1.3 Maxine Hong Kingston as the Leading Figure of Chinese American Literature

Maxine Hong Kingston, the second generation Chinese American, grew up listening to her mother's “talk-stories”—legends, myths, historical accounts, family tales, and telling and retelling of familial narratives. Her idea of China, the homeland of her parents,