

南开21世纪华人文学丛书

# 美國夢

的诱惑和虚幻

华裔美国女作家作品研究

张延军 著

The American Dream in Selected Works  
by Three Chinese American Women Writers:  
From Dreams to Nightmares

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天 津

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

美国梦的诱惑和虚幻：华裔美国女作家作品研究 / 张延军  
著. —天津：南开大学出版社，2014.6  
(南开 21 世纪华人文学丛书)  
ISBN 978-7-310-04506-8

I. ①美… II. ①张… III. ①华人—女作家—文学作品  
研究—美国—现代 IV. ①I712.065

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2014)第 109789 号

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南开大学出版社出版发行

出版人：孙克强

地址：天津市南开区卫津路 94 号 邮政编码：300071

营销部电话：(022)23508339 23500755

营销部传真：(022)23508542 邮购部电话：(022)23502200

\*

河北昌黎太阳红彩色印刷有限责任公司印刷

全国各地新华书店经销

\*

2014 年 6 月第 1 版 2014 年 6 月第 1 次印刷

210×148 毫米 32 开本 6.5 印张 2 插页 175 千字

定价：18.00 元

如遇图书印装质量问题，请与本社营销部联系调换，电话：(022)23507125

## Acknowledgments ( 致谢 )

With my deepest bows in the Chinese tradition, I express my sincere thanks to my committee, Dr. Ronald Emerick, Dr. David Downing, and Dr. Susan Comfort, who have done excellent team work and helped me achieve my American Dream of education.

Their knowledge of the American Dream, political insights, and their cultural studies and postcolonial feminist theories that guided this critical study of the American Dream of the Chinese from the points of view of race, class, and gender broadened my vision and deepened my research interest. They have advised me extensively and intensively: from helping me choose the topic, to advising research methodologies and theories, to refining the manuscript with advice on editing details. For urgency at my age, they have always put me on top of their advisee list and responded quickly to my product, which was so encouraging that I completed the project ahead of time. While Ph.D. is interpreted as “Permanent Head Damage” by some doctoral students, working with my committee was, for me, an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

I am equally grateful to the late professor Dr. Karen Dandurand, whose advice on the proposal at the initial stage has benefited me enormously, leading me

to the door of academic research. I am also grateful to Dr. Lingyan Yang, from whom I have learned about Asian/Chinese American literature and Asian American critical theories. No less grateful am I for the English faculty at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, especially those from whom I took classes and learned all I needed to learn to meet the requirements of the program, without which I could never have crossed such hurdles as the candidacy exam, comprehensive exam, and dissertation.

My heartfelt thanks also go to the staff in the IUP English department and other offices. The graduate office secretary, Bertha Cecconi, was helpful every time I needed assistance. Dr. Michele Petrucci and Ms. Jessica Dories at the Office of International Education were also supportive with their advice about study and life at IUP for international students and for me personally as well. The Stapleton Library is particularly worthy of note, where I gathered most of the research materials, many times from the interlibrary loan. Mrs. Michele Corcoran was enormously helpful in obtaining materials from other libraries. She sent me articles quickly every time I requested them via ILLIAD. Her help is extremely important for a study of an ethnic nature.

My fellow students and friends at IUP were supportive, too. Jianhui Wang, also my colleague in China, gave me lots of advice in all stages of my study. Wan-li Chen from Taiwan recommended a book on class analysis which came just in time for Chapter III on *Bone* that needed more class analysis. My friends in other graduate programs at IUP were all supportive in one way or another. I am especially grateful to my American friends, Claudia and Darryl Petrus, who were encouraging and helpful throughout my academic journey. My family and relatives supported me during all these challenging years. My husband, Tying Li, promised to sponsor me

for the publication of this study.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the late Professor, my beloved teacher Wu Bing at Beijing Foreign Studies University for her enormous help. My thanks also go to Professor Guo Qiqing at the same university and Professor Zhang Shaojie at Northeastern Normal University for their support of the publication.

To the late professor, my beloved teacher, Wu Bing  
献给我国华裔美国文学研究的拓荒者和耕耘者  
已故教授 吴冰

## 深切怀念我的恩师

吴冰教授（1935-2012）生前是北京外国语大学  
英语学院教授，博士生导师，华裔美国文学研究中  
心主任。我是吴冰老师的学生，现为沈阳师范大学  
教授。2012年6月10日，我在母校召开的亚裔美  
国文学国际研讨会期间，出席了吴冰老师的追思会。  
我与吴冰老师的家人、领导、同事、学生以及朋友  
一同追忆幕幕往事，缅怀恩师。

吴冰老师道德高尚、业务精深是尽人皆知的，  
无需我赘述。只说她的平易近人，就令天下感动。  
早年我与老师都是书信联系，虽然我只是个普通学  
生，她却有信必复。1996年我公派留学之前，老师  
亲笔为我写了推荐信，还去学校帮我办理学习成绩  
单。2004年我再次留学美国，攻读文学批评博士学  
位（亚裔美国文学方向）。学习期间，特别是撰写  
毕业论文期间，我从选题、开题、创作到论文答辩，  
都得到了吴冰老师的帮助。她把自己的文稿发送  
给我，向我推荐华裔美国文学研究中心网站。我夜以  
继日、刻苦发奋，付出了比年轻人难以比及的努力，  
终于完成学业，成为国内外少有的“老女博士”，  
那时我已54岁半！

吴冰老师对东北的华裔美国文学教学尤为关心。2010年初回国前，我收到老师的一封邮件。她说，东北这方面的人才十分紧缺。东北师大搞华裔美国文学的老师退休了。回国后我收到的邮件又说，沈师大下学期研究生要开亚裔美国文学课了。我真是惊异不已，老师身在北京，竟如此了解东北华裔美国文学的教学情况！她还让我把已发表的论文，特别是用英语写的论文发送给她，挂在华裔美国文学研究中心的网站上。

吴冰老师退休后还在《外国文学评论》和《外国文学研究》等国家级核心期刊上发表论文。敬佩之余我也惭愧不已。因年龄等原因，我曾一度情绪低落，不求进取。追思会上，吴青老师说，“姐姐的精神要传承下去！”令我为之一振。我想，虽然我现在不能在教学上有所作为，但我要努力将学习成果转换成科研成果，以实际行动报答恩师对我的培育。现在，我已小有进步，但仍需再接再厉。我会永远以吴冰老师为榜样，活到老，学到老，研究到老，为我国的华裔美国文学研究作出更大的贡献。作为中老年女性学者，我希望得到领导、社会和学术界更多的理解与支持。

在美国留学期间，我曾想，待我博士论文出版时，一定请吴冰老师作序。无奈她老人家永远地离开了我们。今天，在老师离世的第二个周年日，我把研究成果献给我的恩师吴冰教授。借机，我要向北京外国语大学的郭栖庆教授、东北师范大学的张绍杰教授、南京大学的杨金才教授和沈阳师范大学的王大超教授致谢，感谢他们在学术方面为我提供的帮助。沈阳师范大学和国际商学院两级领导对我出版本书的理解和支持也令我钦佩，我向他们致以崇高的敬意！最后，我感谢南开大学出版社搭建的“南开21世纪华人文学丛书”这一平台，特别向张彤工作室为本书所做的一切表示由衷的谢意。

张延军

2014年3月30日于沈阳



## 前 言

本书以知名华裔美国女作家汤亭亭笔下的《中国佬》(1980)、武慧明的《骨》(1993)和任碧莲的《典型美国人》(1991)三部作品为研究对象,围绕华人工人阶级和知识分子两个阶层的“美国梦”进行研究。文本分析表明:排华法与社会上的排华势力遥相呼应,致使早期华工备受种族压迫、阶级剥削和性别歧视之苦,晚些入境的华工家属也难逃其害。20世纪下半叶的华人知识分子亦不例外,多与成功的神话无缘。可见,美国梦并未保证华人的平等权利,相反,他们被视为“劣等民族、逆来顺受、沉默寡言、性别变态”的“他者”。原著作者针对这些偏见,塑造出具有反抗策略的华人形像,重构了华人的民族文化身份,再现了反抗的华裔美国史。

本书同时涉猎原著的跨文化思想。三位作家超越东西方不同的文化界限,在信奉西方“自由意识”的同时,也对祖籍国文化表示认同。她们通过“差异政治”(politics of differences),在亚裔美国和亚洲之间搭建文化沟通的桥梁。其跨文化叙事,表达了后殖民主义批评家爱德华·萨义德(Edward Said)的“争取人类解放、反对民族分裂”等多元文化思想。

本文选定三部作品并以美国梦作为主题研究有如下几方面原因:首先,国内外对华裔美国梦的研究相对较少。学者们的研究相对集中在身份探

索、母女关系、文化认同、批评“消声”和争取话语权等问题上。在为数不多的华裔美国梦研究中，华人的美国梦被深入解读为“身份探索”(Chua 46)或“属于美国”(Liu 10)。本书提出，作者的美国梦远远超过对个人文化身份的诉求。作者在声称属于美国的同时，表达了争取社会平等、实现世界和平的良好愿望。

第二，目前国内外对有关华人家庭文学的研究相对较少(Fong 239)。1943 年废除排华法以前，法令不允许华人家属入境。早期华人家庭的缺失造成华人家庭文学的缺失。而 20 世纪下半叶的家庭文学也是缺失男性色彩的女性文学。对选定的作品进行研究，可以在分析夫妻等同代人关系时，丰富华人家庭文学研究，这是对两性关系研究的一大贡献。

第三，国内外亚裔美国文学批评中对有关“劳动与阶级”的作品涉猎不足。张敬珏注意到，尽管不少文学作品表现了资本剥削、阶级特权、贫困、阶级与种族关系等，可是，阶级问题在文学批评中一直没受到重视(13)。林玉玲等学者也指出，亚裔美国文学中有关阶级的研究几乎是空白(Lim et al 14)。三部作品从华人的身份落差，再现了阶级压迫的华人史。可见，对选定作品进行研究，填补了阶级研究的空白。

除去以上原因，还有个重要原因不可忽视：作品都以历史事实为根据。已故学者吴冰教授在《华裔美国文学的历史性》一文中指出：华裔美国文学的一些特点都是和历史——华裔美国史以及中国历史——分不开的(120)。的确，华裔美国史既是 19 世纪下半叶华工在美国铁路、煤矿、农场等劳动营里被压榨、受欺凌的剥削史，也是 20 世纪上半叶的华人在东西两岸当“业主”受欺凌的压迫史，亦是二战后新一代移民充满酸甜苦辣的安家立业史。国内已有学者对表现华裔美国移民史的文学表示关心，比如薛玉凤的关于“华埠单身汉”的研究。但是，该方面的研究有待深入。

作品研究具有重大的理论意义。赛义德认为，西方霸权势力对东方的统治是个极为复杂的历史现象，不可能真实地在西方文

学中得以表现。他主张东方有自己的文学表现自己。美国印度裔女性主义学者斯皮瓦克 (Spivak) 和默罕蒂 (Mohanty) 挑战西方女性主义文学, 认为它不代表第三世界女性, 提出第三世界女性要有自己的文学。她们将美国少数族裔女性归为第三世界女性。选定的作品打破沉默, 不仅表现了华人男性, 也表现了华人女性对种族歧视、阶级剥削和性别压迫的有策略的反抗, 对第三世界女性文学做出了贡献。本书应用后殖民主义和女性主义理论, 以华人的生存和反抗策略再现华人对多重压迫的反抗, 批评西方社会对他们的“逆来顺受”等偏见, 重构华人勤劳勇敢、足智多谋的民族形象。这是本书对美国少数族裔和少数族裔女性文学研究的贡献。

作品研究同时具有深刻的现实意义。美国梦提倡机会平等, 相信经过努力就可以功成名就。但在历史上, 不少华人落入了美国梦的陷阱。这种社会现实启发人们接受历史教训, 进而思考改变社会的途径, 向社会平等和世界和平的目标迈进。

本书由五个章节组成: 第一章引言中诠释美国梦的概念及其对华埠社会的影响, 声明主题句和研究的必要性, 阐释研究的理论根据和研究方法, 最后对各个章节做了简介。

第二章对汤亭亭《中国佬》的研究中以华裔美国梦为切入点, 回顾曾祖父、祖父和父母双亲追求美国梦的心路历程, 并以他们的生存策略和反抗策略批评西方社会对华人的多种偏见。本章还对华人反抗性别压迫的历史进行了深入细致的分析, 揭示作者的新男性主义思想。最后, 本章再现了“弟弟”越战时期的经历, 分析了新时期新的种族矛盾与种族关系, 揭示了作者的跨文化立场, 进而表达了华裔美国梦的追求: 实现社会平等和世界和平。

第三章对伍慧明的《骨》进行文本分析, 挑战主流社会有关华人为“模范民族”的误导性宣传。本章以 20 世纪下半叶旧金山唐人街梁家的生活为例, 分析美国梦的虚无缥缈。研究认为, 梁家的悲剧不仅是由文化差异所致, 更是诸如民族、种族、性别、阶层以及少数族裔社区内部各少数族裔群体之间的劳动剥削等多

种问题相互作用的结果。本章还通过分析夫妻关系，展现作者的女性主义思想，通过分析姊妹关系揭示作者的跨文化立场。

第四章对任碧莲的小说《典型美国人》的研究中，首先解读标题中“典型美国人”的含义，分析张家如何为发财致富和个人自由等不同的追求，被美国梦误入歧途、落入陷阱。本章通过分析夫妻、姐弟等同代人之间的关系，表达男女平等的思想；通过对姐姐的人物性格分析，展现作者的跨文化思想。三个章节对所选作品的主题研究说明，美国梦中所谓机会平等的承诺未曾兑现。虽然华人对美国的开发和建设做出了不可磨灭的贡献，但是，他们从未融入美国国家的主体。

第五章结论引用了莉莎·洛《移民法》中的政治批评。她说，亚裔移民史上的种族形成，始终包含着阶级形成和性别形成。这种历史的形成，通过政治控制的手段（比如法律手段），加深了资方与移民作为劳动阶级的矛盾（Lowe 14）。华裔美国史上的种族、阶级、性别等问题交织融汇，矛盾重重。这种复杂的历史说明，在多元文化并存的全球社会中，主流社会与边缘文化之间应该求同存异，西方社会与东方国家之间应该互相理解和互相尊重。三位作家看到时代在发展，社会在进步，从多角度多层面表达了华裔美国梦的最高境界：实现社会平等和人类解放，这是作品的文化政治意义所在，也是本书研究的进步意义所在。

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# Chapter I Introduction: The Gold Mountain Dreams

## 1. The Dream Concept

In *The Declaration of Independence*, the founding fathers of America “hold certain truths to be self evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” This sentiment, I believe, is the foundation of the American Dream, even though the ideal has rarely realized in history. The term “American Dream” was first used in *The Epic of America* (1931) by historian James Truslow Adams. He defines it as “that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement” (404). In David Madden’s edited book, *American Dreams, American Nightmares* (1970), Robert Heilman indicates in his article, “The Dream Metaphor: Some Ramifications,” that “Dreams about America are an import from Europe, where they were an old habit dating from the Renaissance” (7). In American history, Heilman observes, “the dream in action has repeatedly been emigration: from Europe to



America, from society-at-large to utopian communities, and from the east coast to various receding wests" (10). In the same book, Maxwell Geismar states that the American Dream "has been our ruling myth, as a culture, and in the literature which both reveals and helps to shape our culture" (45).

In *The American: the Making of a New Man* (1943), however, Adams argues that "the American Dream turned for a while into a nightmare of human misery" (144). Writers in Madden's book also articulate the American Dream gone wrong in their writing. Geismar, for example, illustrates that the first great flowering of New England Transcendentalism, which, in such pure voices as those of Emerson and Thoreau, expressed the American Dream at its purest, lyrical prime. Their American Dream, however, was followed directly by the crushing and bloody epoch of the Civil War. In literature, as another example, Theodore Dreiser, "the world-famous figure—whose career has best epitomized all the glowing features of the American Dream—ended up as the historian of its demise and as the author of dark and nightmarish parables" (46, 48-49). Heilman explains, "People have dreams that cannot be fulfilled because things are the way they are; or dreams are fulfilled, and the dreamers remain unfulfilled; or people rely on dreams that ought not to be fulfilled because they are unfulfilling" (11). Madden notes in the introduction to his book (1970) that "Dreams, ideals, visions, myths, legends are now easily exposed as nightmares, frauds in disguise" (xxviii).

The American Dream has been attractive to Chinese immigrants just as it has been to any other immigrant population. Like the dreams of most other immigrants that have failed, the American Dream as experienced by the Chinese in America goes wrong for countless reasons. The selected texts by Chinese American women writers demonstrate that Chinese immigrants/Americans hold the American