

华鸟美巢

——美国家庭收养中国儿童问题研究

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著

Chinese Birds in American Nests

A Study
on American Families' Adoption
of Chinese Children



合肥工业大学出版社



华鸟美巢

—— 美国华裔在中国及国际间的影响 ——



华 鸟 美 巢

——美国家庭收养中
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心^{*}

世上的桥梁数不清，
但只有一座横跨太平洋，
你用眼睛看不见，
却能想象它存在于你的心。

世上的父母数不清，
但只有一些从中国收养宝贝，
你用脑子难区分，
却能和每一家相聚在你的心。

世上的孩子数不清，
但只有一些迈过那座爱之桥，
你用双臂抱不尽，
却能将每一个牢记在你的心。

*这是1999年11月作者在宴请 Rick (Richard Tessler) 一家的宴会上用英文朗诵的几句话。说是诗实在称不上，有点像儿歌、顺口溜，后来却以“诗”名刊登在 FCC Newsletter, NY (纽约《收养中国儿童的美国家庭通讯》) 上。Rick 和 Pat 夫妇当时应邀在安徽农业大学作半年访问学者，他(她)们带着两个从中国合肥儿童福利院收养的女孩 Hannah 和 Zoe 一起在中国“建一个新家”(Making a home in Hefei)。此间，Hannah 和 Zoe 在安农大幼儿园上学。

Heart

A Poem by Huang Banghan

There are countless bridges in the world.
But only one which crosses the Pacific Ocean.
You can't see it in your eyes.
But you can imagine it in your heart.

There are countless parents in the world.
But only some who adopt children from China.
You can't distinguish each one in your mind.
But you can join each one in your heart.

There are countless children in the world.
But only some who pass through the bridge of love.
You can't hold each one in your arms.
But you can remember each one in your heart.

Preface

Ten years ago I began a research project with Huang Banghan and his colleague Wang Liyao of the Anhui Academy of Social Sciences to investigate the lives of children who were abandoned to Chinese orphanages. As a China scholar and an adoptive parent of a girl from China, I had both personal and scholarly interests in this topic. I knew that someday my daughter would grow up with many questions about her origins in China, why she was abandoned, how she came to be adopted to America and what happened to other children like her in China? I soon learned that over half of the children adopted from Chinese orphanages were adopted by Chinese families. I became very interested in the history of Chinese adoption and how adopted Chinese children fared in China. At the same time my Chinese colleagues were understandably interested in learning about what happened to Chinese children adopted internationally.

With the help of a research grant, we were able to investigate these issues of adoption on both sides of the Pacific. This book is the culmination of ten years of research and multiple research trips made to the US by Professor Huang Banghan to interview US families raising children adopted from China. More than one hundred families opened their homes and hearts to Professor Huang as he traveled around the United States. Over the years, Professor Huang was able to see these children grow and change, passing through the early stages of childhood and approaching the difficult years of being a teenager. Professor Huang immediately established a special

rapport with many of these children who saw him as a jovial uncle from afar. Parents saw him as a way to establish a tie to China for their children and a means to communicate back to China, and perhaps to birth parents, how much they appreciated and loved their adopted children. Most American parents want people in China to know that the children born there and adopted to the US are deeply loved, cared for like birth children, and doing well.

As Professor Huang makes clear there are many challenges as well as blessings for these children growing up in the US. Issues of ethnic identity are important in a country like the US, a country that is made up of multiple waves of immigrants from all over the world yet still dominated by European Americans who form the white majority. Chinese adoptees are now a growing part of the diverse US immigrant experience and a new kind of Chinese American. While some Chinese adoptees are being raised by Asian American parents, most are being raised by parents with no ancestral ties to China or any other part of Asia. What it means to be an adopted Chinese American will be shaped by those now experiencing it. Professor Huang is learning from these children what that identity will entail and what hurdles they will confront on the road to becoming adults.

One of the hurdles these children will confront as they grow up will involve how they are treated by people in China when they return to visit China, as many of them will. Some adoptees may even choose to work or live in China for an extended period. A few of these Chinese Americans will speak Chinese fluently, will know a great deal about Chinese society and may while still children visit China many times with their families; many more of them will come to China with only a general and distant understanding of "Chinese culture," only a few Chinese words, but a deep curiosity about the

place they were born. Professor Huang's book provides Chinese readers with invaluable insight into the lives of these children. Hopefully this book will help Chinese people better understand and respect who they are on their own terms, not judged in terms of how "Chinese" or how "American" they are, or stereotyped as people with "yellow skin and a white heart." Having crossed geographical and cultural borders they have grown up with their families in the US and Europe developing unique identities that should be valued and understood for who and what they are as adopted Chinese Americans. It is my hope that these children will find full acceptance and respect for who they are on both sides of the Atlantic.

Professor Huang is one of only a few Chinese scholars who have had the opportunity to learn first hand about the emerging identity of these children and their lives in their families. He understands that we must learn from them and their unique experience about who they are and who they want to become. I hope that he will have many future opportunities to return to listen to the voices of these growing children as they become young adults, for only they can tell us the outcome of this journey that began in China.

Kay Ann Johnson
Amherst, MA
April 9, 2005

序

10年前我开始和黄邦汉及他的同伴安徽社会科学院的王利耀一起对福利院的那些被遗弃儿童的生活状况进行调查研究。作为一个研究中国的学者和一个中国小女孩的收养母亲,我对这个问题感兴趣既有个人原因,也有科研需要。我知道将来我的女儿长大后,有一天她会对她的中国来源产生很多疑问,诸如为什么被遗弃,她是怎样被收养到美国的,在中国像她一样被遗弃的其他孩子生活得如何等等。很快我了解到中国儿童福利院的孩子一半以上是被中国人收养的,我也因此对中国的收养历史及被中国人收养的儿童的命运产生了浓厚的兴趣。同样我的中国同事们也对被外国人收养的中国孩子的生活产生了很大兴趣。

在一项研究基金的资助下,我们开始对太平洋两岸的收养问题进行调查研究。这本书是黄邦汉教授十年来多次来美国访问收养中国儿童的家庭成果的结晶。当黄邦汉教授来美国访问时,100多个收养家庭对他敞开了家门和心扉。这些年来,黄邦汉教授目睹了这些孩子的成长和变化,看着她们度过第一阶段童年期走向艰难的青少年期。黄邦汉教授很快便和很多收养儿童建立了和谐亲密的关系,孩子们视他为来自远方的快乐的叔叔。收养父母把他看作建立和中国交流的纽带的途径。通过他,他们的孩子可以和中国有更多交流,或许他们可以联系到自己的亲生父母,告诉亲生父母他们是如何珍爱着这些孩子。大部分收养父母都希望中国人知道这些出生在中国收养到美国的孩子被收养父母所珍爱,被收养父母像亲生子女一样照料,这些孩子在美国生活得很好。

正如黄邦汉教授所指出,这些孩子在美国生活也面临着很多挑战。在各种移民组成的美国,占支配地位的仍然是欧洲移

民的后裔美国白人,在美国这样的国家种族身份非常重要。被美国人收养的中国儿童现在形成了一种新的美籍华人,这是一种特殊的移民经历。尽管有些中国儿童在美国被亚裔美国人收养,但大多数是被与中国,与亚洲没有任何渊源的美国父母。成为被收养的美籍华人到底意味着什么?这些孩子现在正在经历着。黄邦汉教授正在从这些孩子的经历中了解这种身份给孩子带来了什么以及这些孩子在成长的道路上会遇到什么样的挑战。

这些孩子成长过程中将要面临的挑战之一是她们回中国访问时中国人对她们的态度。她们中很多人以后都将回中国访问。有些被收养者甚至会选择在中国工作生活一段时间。这些美籍华人中有一些能流利地说中文,对中国社会也了解很多,这可能是因为在小时候收养父母就多次带她们访问中国。但大多数人只是对中国有整体印象,对“中国文化”也是远距离的了解,她们只会说少量中文,对她们出生的地方有着深深的疑惑。黄邦汉教授的书为中国读者提供了他对这些孩子生活的很有价值的深入观察。希望这本书能帮助中国人更好地理解 and 尊重这些孩子的身份,不要用“中国人”、“美国人”来对她们进行判断,更不要用“黄皮白心”来套用她们。跨越地域和文化的双重界限这些孩子来到美国和欧洲与收养父母一起生活,形成了自己的独特身份。这种被收养的美籍华人的身份应该被理解、尊重。我希望这些孩子在大西洋两岸都以自己的身份取得充分的接受和尊重。

黄邦汉教授是少数能有机会了解这些突然出现的有着独特身份的孩子在收养家庭中的生活的中国学者之一。他理解我们必须通过了解这些孩子和她们的独特经历来判断她们是谁,她们想成为什么样的人。我希望他将来能有很多机会回到美国聆听这些孩子成长中的声音,因为只有这些孩子能告诉我们她们始于中国的人生旅途的结局。

Kay Ann Johnson

CHINESE BIRDS IN AMERICAN NESTS

PREFACE

BY

RICHARD TESSLER

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

While most Americans who adopt Chinese children believe that their child's primary attachment should be to American culture, they also think that it is important for their child to develop an appreciation of their Chinese birth culture. Without the encouragement and support of Chinese people, this is very difficult. The authors of this book are among a small group of academics in China who are helping American parents to raise their adopted Chinese children biculturally, at the same time that they are helping Chinese people to distinguish myth from reality about international adoption, and creating greater understanding between our two countries.

Some background is necessary to understand the circumstances of these Chinese Birds in American Nests. Beginning in 1989, the People's Republic of China informally allowed foreigners to adopt orphaned children from child welfare houses. It is not known why the Chinese government decided to move in this direction, but there are some theories about it. One is that increasing contact with the outside world, resulting from China's Open Door Policy, created a

climate in which international adoptions could be viewed as a humanitarian response to China's one child per family policy. Some American social scientists believe that foreign adoption also helped the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs to deal with overcrowding in the child welfare houses. In any case, adoptions by Americans increased rapidly after the passage of the Adoption Law in 1992 which gave formal recognition to foreign adoption. By 1995, the annual number of adoptions by Americans had exceeded 3,000. By the turn of the century, it had exceeded 5,000 adoptions per year, and now is more than 7,000. These are not large numbers relative the total population of children in child welfare houses in China, or relative to the total number of adoptions from all sources in American, but the trend is still significant. The Chinese children who have already been adopted by Americans, and those that will be adopted in the years ahead, continue in a tradition of Chinese immigration to America. They come to America under circumstances that are very different from that of other immigrants. Their lives began with abandonment, perhaps in a bus station, outside an apartment building, or other public place, then an orphanage, and later for many a foster family in the countryside that would take care of them until an adoption could be arranged. Their circumstances changed a lot as soon as they arrived in America, coming to affluent homes and to a standard of living that other immigrants have to struggle for years of generations to achieve, if ever. The experience might be described as similar to dropping into a "honey jar."

The history of America has long been written as the story of the assimilation of immigrants into a great melting pot. But in recent decades theories of assimilation have given way to the idea of cultural pluralism, and to respect for diversity of race, ethnicity,

and cultural origins. It is against the backdrop of these changes that many American adoptive parents are encouraging their children to identify as both American and Chinese and to become knowledgeable and appreciative of both cultural traditions. But, their unfamiliarity of Chinese language, traditions, and values makes this a big challenge for them.

To become competent bi-culturally requires opportunities to learn about the birth culture as well as the adoption culture, the spoken and written languages of both countries, and to make both a part of one's self-identity. This requires extraordinary efforts for adoptive parents. Even when they have the best intentions, the opportunities for Chinese socialization outside of China are very limited. As a result it is difficult for their children to attain a high level of competence in the culture of their birth, unless they have much interaction with Chinese people. In raising their Chinese-born children in America, some parents choose to emphasize American culture and identity, others put an emphasis on Chinese socialization, and still others try to expose their children simultaneously to both Chinese and American cultures. At present, we do not know what outcomes are associated with their different paths.

Although the research on the adjustment of adopted Chinese children in America is incomplete, there is every indication from parents' reports that the children are adjusting very well. The parents talk enthusiastically about their Chinese adopted children with the excitement that is characteristic of new parents everywhere. One new adoptive father, a middle-aged man in his 40s, told this author: "This adoption is the best thing that has ever happened to me."

By the same token, this new book *Chinese Birds in American*

Nests is one of the best things to happen in the adoption literature. Its publication reflects a growing appreciation of international adoption among influential and well-educated Chinese persons. The birds who are the children of this story are thriving in American nests. But there are also many challenges ahead, especially as they become adolescents and also later as they become more and more independent of their parents. Considering the uncertainties that lie ahead, it is very reassuring to welcome this new book which contains many important lessons not only about international adoptions but also about communication between Chinese and Americans

Richard Tessler
Amherst, Massachusetts
April 2, 2005

序

尽管大多数收养中国儿童的美国人相信他们收养的孩子应该更认同美国文化，他们也认为让孩子尽量多地了解中国文化非常重要。如果没有中国人的鼓励与支持，做到这一点有些困难。在中国有这样一批学者，他们帮助美国父母以双重文化为背景养育收养的中国儿童，也帮助中国人揭开涉外收养的神秘面纱，增进中美两国间的相互理解，本书作者就是这样的中国学者。

要了解美巢中华鸟的状况，一些背景知识是必备的。中国从1989年开始非正式允许外国人从中国福利机构收养孤儿。迄今尚不清楚中国政府为什么决定做此转向，但对此也有一些说法。其中有一种说法是：由于对外开放政策的实施，中国与外界的交往越来越多，形成了一种氛围，人们把国际收养看成是对中国独生子女政策的人道主义反映。一些美国社会科学家认为，允许外国人收养中国儿童也有助于中国民政部门应对儿童福利院人满为患的局面。到1995年，美国人年收养中国儿童超过3 000人。到上个世纪末，美国人每年收养的中国儿童超过了5 000人，现在每年超过了7 000人。相对于中国儿童福利院的儿童总数或相对于美国各个渠道的收养总数来说，这些数字并不算大，但这种趋势意义是深远的。

这些已经被美国人收养的儿童和那些即将被美国人收养的儿童是来自于中国的移民。但是他们和其他的移民背景完全不同。他们的生活从被遗弃开始，或许被遗弃在公共汽车站，或许被遗弃在公寓楼的门口，或许被遗弃在其他公共场所，之后被送进孤儿院，其中许多后来被农村寄养家庭照料，直至被安

排收养。这些孤儿一旦被收养到美国，生活状况便大为改观，他们来到富裕的家庭，达到了其他移民通过多年或几代人的努力方能达到，甚至有些移民永远达不到的生活水准。这种经历常常被形容为掉进了“蜜罐子”。

长期以来人们把美国称为多元文化的“大熔炉”。美国的历史就是同化移民的历史。但是最近几十年来，同化理论已经转向文化多元主义理念和对人种、种族和文化渊源的尊重。正是在这样的背景下，许多美国收养父母鼓励他们的孩子认同自己既是中国人又是美国人，希望他们通晓并且尊重两个国家的文化传统。然而对中国语言、传统以及价值观念的不熟悉给他们达到希望的目标带来了莫大的挑战。

要真正达到双文化社会化，要求他们既要学习出生地文化又要学习收养地文化，还要学习两个国家的口语和书面语，并把这些都作为自我认同的组成部分。这要求收养父母要付出巨大的努力。即使收养父母有着良好的愿望，在中国之外实现中国文化社会化的机会也是有限的。结果是除非和中国人有很多交往，这些被收养的中国儿童对出生地文化的了解和理解不可能达到相当的高度。在美国养育这些出生在中国的儿童，有的父母强调美国文化和身份认同，有的父母强调中国文化社会化，还有一些父母努力让他们的孩子同时接受两种文化。目前，我们尚不知晓这些不同的方法分别会产生什么样的后果。

尽管对这些被收养的中国儿童如何适应美国生活所做的研究不够全面，但是，收养父母的报告中都显示这些儿童很好地适应了美国的生活。收养父母谈起他们收养的中国孩子总是津津乐道，充满激情，这也是所有新父母们的特点。一位刚成为养父的40多岁的中年男子告诉作者：“收养是我人生中最美好的事情。”

由此看来，新著《华鸟美巢》是收养文学中最重要的作品之一。该书的出版反映了国际收养在有影响和有教养的中国人