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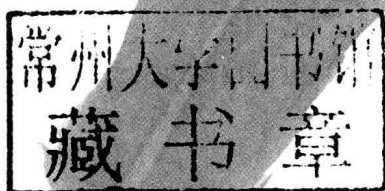


异乡客A. T.何芭特的 中国叙事

*The American of
Alice Tisdale Hobart and
Her China Narrative*

山东大学出版社

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前 言

透过历史的烟云，中国形象在美国人眼中历经变化。殖民时期的美国文人学者把中国看成是理想的典范。1784 年美国快帆“中国皇后号”到达广州，中美开始了直接接触。此后，这个被理想化的中国形象便逐渐褪去了昔日斑斓的光彩。19 世纪，中国更是成为了被贬抑的对象。直到 20 世纪上半叶，特别是 30 年代，美国人眼中的中国形象才又开始得到提升。一些美国女作家在中国形象的这次转变中，起到了举足轻重的作用。

当时有许多美国女性来到中国。她们一方面试图改造中国人，另一方面则在中国营造美国式的家庭氛围以保持和传递本国文化，避免她们的丈夫、孩子被中国所同化。然而，她们中不少人却最终不同程度地被中国所改变。她们意识到美国文化的缺陷，开始看到中国传统文化中存在的值得汲取的养分，并通过作品提倡用中国文化来弥补美国文化的不足。今天的我们对她们或许已经非常陌生，但是在 20 世纪上半叶，她们的名字却时常会出现在《大西洋月刊》(*The Atlantic Monthly*)、《纽约时报书评》(*New York Times Book Review*)、《书单——新书指南》(*Booklist—A Guide to New Books*)、《文学月刊》(*Literature Monthly*)、《中国评论》(*The China Critic*)等报纸、杂志上。

A. T. 何芭特就是其中非常突出的一位。她在 1917 年至 1936 年间发表的中国主题的作品大致可分为三个时期,分别再现了不同的中国形象。本研究以当时中国文人和记者对中国的描述为背景,通过考察何芭特作品中对中国的描述,试图管窥以下问题:这些美国女作家来华前的中国观是如何形成的?哪些原因促使她们塑造了别样的中国形象?她们描述的中国和中国人与当时中国作家对自己国家和国民的描述有何异同?是何原因导致产生这些异同?

研究主体部分共分为三部分。第一部分分析了 1917 年到 1926 年间何芭特初到中国所写文学作品中勾勒的中国形象,以及形成这一形象的主要原因。在这一时期的两部作品《拓荒于古老的世界》(1917)和《长沙城边》(1926)中,何芭特把中国比作荒原。她认为这个荒原不仅存在于中国人的现实生活中,而且由于中国人对基督教和现代化科技的无知,也存在于他们的心灵之中。导致她形成这种中国观的原因,除了当时中美两国的经济和科技发展的巨大反差外,主要在于她对中国的预期想象以及她作为传教士教师和美孚公司职员妻子的双重身份。来中国之前,何芭特受当时美国社会流行文化和基督教思想的影响,把中国看作美国西部开拓的最后边疆。她认为美国人在中国从事的一切重演了先辈们在北美大陆的拓荒史。何芭特强烈的宗教情结和她对美国拓展国外贸易的支持,使她对开拓海外边疆的召唤做出了积极的响应。她以传教士的身份来到中国,试图改造中国“异教徒”;她认为美国女性是“灯油”,男性则是用西方科技和知识来照亮“黑暗”中国的“油灯”。何芭特在这一时期的作品中把中国塑造成了有待美国人前去开垦的荒原来为美国的中国政策辩护。中国作家这一时期对中国的描述也可说是纷纭复杂,但大致可以分为三类。第一类是以辜鸿铭为代表的保守派,他们认为中国文明优于西方文明,西方人把中国描述成劣于西方完全是出于无知。第二类是以康有为和梁启超为代表的改良派,他们部分地同意西方人关于中国落后于西方的看法,但仍认为中国传统文化有许多可取之处。第三类是以陈独秀、胡适、鲁迅等人为代表的新文化运动的主

将们,尽管他们的政治文化观点不尽相同甚至后来大相径庭,但在那一时期他们一致主张摒弃旧文化、学习西方、创造中国的新文化。然而他们的主张和西方作家仍有所不同。他们并非认为中国传统文化毫无可取之处,而是认识到中庸之道对中国的影响之深及对改革的禁锢作用,因而提出了矫枉必须过正的偏激主张。通过与中国人自我描述的比照,本研究认为无论是外国人还是本国人在看待同一文化现象时,往往受到自身政治文化立场的制约,从而形成不同的形象观念。

第二部分探讨了1926年到1929年间何芭特中国观的第一次转变。从何芭特这一阶段的两部作品——《南京城内》(1928)和《长江》(1929)中,可以看出中国在何芭特笔下从有待开垦的荒原变成了波涛汹涌、急流滚滚、极具威胁性的“长江”。她的这一变化与中国民族革命运动的高涨以及她对在中国的西方女性的重新定位有密切关系。1926到1929年间,何芭特目睹了北伐战争和一系列中国人民争取自身权益的运动。中国民族意识的觉醒使西方人在中国的特权和地位受到威胁。与此同时,在何芭特看来生活在中国的西方女性也不再是“灯油”,而成了美国拓荒政策和中国“排外”运动的牺牲品。何芭特看到了美国女性在中国所面临的来自中国人、来自美国本土和来自她们丈夫的三重疏离。她原先试图用美国文明改造中国的梦想幻灭了。中美文明的相遇对她而言成了一场悲剧。她笔下的中国形象也因此从荒原变成了“黄祸”:中国被比作奔腾咆哮的江河,吞噬着西方人的生命,并将摧毁西方人在中国所作的一切努力。从中国这一时期的报纸报道评论中可以看出,与何芭特相反,中国人认为自己才是帝国主义侵略的受害者,民族革命运动并非排外而是争取平等权利、反抗帝国主义压迫的正义斗争。或许一些西方人不远万里来到中国确有善意,也随之带来了一些先进的科技知识,然而他们的到来与中西间许多不平等条约有着千丝万缕的历史联系,因此即使是最具善意的西方人在中国人眼中也难免带有侵略的色彩。何芭特没有意识到这一点,而是把她们在中国所受到的威胁归结于中国人

的“狡诈好战”，这体现了她对中国和中国人的误解和偏见。

第三部分通过对《中国灯油》(1933)和《阳和阴》(1936)的细读，研究了1929年到1936年间何芭特中国观的再次转变。这一时期，中国人在何芭特的笔下具有了和美国人一样的人性。中国的传统文化，尤其是儒家、道家和佛家思想也在某种意义上成了可以照亮美国的“油灯”。促使何芭特笔下中国形象这次重要变化的原因主要有以下几点：1929年席卷美国的经济大萧条暴露出美国政治体制本身的缺陷；美国宗教界开始对狭隘的清教主义教义进行自我批判并开始呼唤宗教的融合；何芭特自己对中国阴阳哲学的理解也进一步促使了她对中国态度的转变。她开始认识到中国人和美国人的相似相通之处，开始欣赏中国文化中许多积极的内容，认识到中美关系应该建立在和谐互补的基础之上。然而这一时期何芭特等美国作家所欣赏和维护的却恰恰是当时已成为主流作家的鲁迅等人称为黑暗、“吃人”、需要铲除的“旧文化”。鲁迅把西方人的赞美称为“软刀子”。他认为中国人会在西方人的赞美声中走向坟墓。形成中美作家间这种强烈反差的主要原因在于鲁迅等中国作家和何芭特等美国作家有意无意地遵循了同样一条“取长补短”的原则，即利用他国文化中优秀的部分来弥补本国文化的不足。经过千百年的发展，中国传统文化的某些方面在当时的中国已经变成了一种束缚，所以鲁迅等中国主流作家想用西方文明中优秀的成分取而代之。而中国传统文化中的这些方面在何芭特眼中却正是美国文化传统中所缺乏和需要的。

初到中国时，何芭特满怀改造“异教徒”的宗教热情，然而面对中国的内战和美国的经济危机，她丰富了阅历，积累了经验，并加深了对在中国的西方女性社会地位的了解。这一切使她的中国观呈现出一种动态的变化过程，超越了许多西方人对中国的各种僵化的模式化的认识。

本研究运用了形象学的理论和后殖民的理论，但又试图超越这些理论来分析影响西方作家东方观形成的原因。爱德华·萨伊德在

《东方主义》中强调了东方主义者对异国的控制欲和权利欲对他们的东方观的影响;让-马克·莫哈和达尼埃尔-亨利·巴柔等著名的形象学研究者强调了形象持有者本国的现实在他们异国形象创造中所起的作用。本研究通过仔细分析何芭特的中国作品和从中反映的作者的中国观的转变,认为这些西方人士所处异国的现实生活和这些形象持有者本人的性别也对形象的形成和重塑产生举足轻重的影响。

客居中国的美国女作家何芭特在她的作品中反映了她对中国态度的逐步变化,她的这种变化在中美交流史上并非特例。20世纪30年代,许多美国作家,尤其是女性作家放弃了她们此前对中国形象的模式化认识,开始探寻研究中国文明中积极、优秀的层面。她们的作品大大提升了美国公众对中国的看法。

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Chapter One Introduction



Marco Polo's
idealized China



Hollywood demonized China



Pearl Buck's
Humanized China

The early 20th century witnessed a transformation of American images of China. The “Yellow Peril” image was gradually replaced by a more humanized view of China. A number of American women writers made contributions towards that change.

Among these women writers, Alice Tisdale Hobart was memorable. She came to China as a paid missionary teacher to change Chinese people in accord with American standards. However, after living in the country for about 15 years, she returned to America as a woman who was changed by China and the Chinese. Aware of the simplicities and limitations of American Puritanism as well as some negative results of the Industrial Revolution, Hobart criticized

Westerners' passion for changing Chinese people in line with a Western world view. Partly accepting the Chinese principle of *yin* and *yang*, she believed that both Chinese culture and American culture had some strengths and weakness. Consequently, the ideal relationship between the two cultures should be like the ideal state of *yin* and *yang*, that is, harmony rather than conflict. A European reviewer, Elisabeth Croll praised Hobart as "one of the first seriously to question in fiction form and for a wider audience the assumed superiority of what America and Europe had to offer China" (171). Among her fourteen published books, nine are on China. The republication of her novel *Oil for the Lamps of China* (1933) by Cornell University Press in 2003 once again testified to the author's significance in today's globalizing world, just as American Professor Sherman Cochran commented in the "Introduction" to the book: "if *Oil for the Lamps of China* was timely in the 1930s, then it also seems timely today."①

However, many American scholars have attributed the positive literary portrayal of China of this period to another woman writer, Pearl S. Buck. Buck authored the 1938 Nobel Prize winning book, *The Good Earth*. Harold R. Isaacs suggested that *The Good Earth* as both book and film had "almost singlehandedly replaced the fantasy images of China and the Chinese held by most Americans . . . it transformed the blurred subhumans into particular human beings" and that American readers received from her novel *The Good Earth* "an image of the Noble Chinese Peasant, solid, wonderful, virtuous, admirable" (156). Elisabeth Croll praised

① See Sherman Cochran, Introduction, *Oil for the Lamps of China*, by Alice Tisdale Hobart (Cornell University, 2003).

Pearl Buck for giving “millions of Europeans their first images of and insights into the domestic and social life of China’s peasants” (208); Dr. Per Hallstrom of the Swedish Academy in his address before the presentation of the Nobel Prize award expressed the wish that Pearl Buck with her notable works might “pave the way to a human sympathy passing over widely separated racial boundaries”^①; and the American President Richard Nixon called her “a human bridge between the civilizations of East and West” (qtd. in Stirling 330).

Many Chinese scholars hold the same opinion.^② Professor Mao Rusheng pointed out that before the publication of *The Good Earth*, scarcely any occidental writers really understood China (Mao 12). Zhao Jiabi, a famous publisher, also conveyed this message in his article “Mrs. Buck and Wang Lung”:

Inspired by Marco Polo’s travelogue and encouraged by the recent gains of the Western aggression, many people have written books about China. On the covers of these books is usually drawn a “Chinaman” grotesquely attired, flanked by some lopsided, incomplete and unintelligible Chinese calligraphy. None of these, of course, can be considered works of literature. The one book that has changed the whole situation is Mrs. Buck’s *The Good Earth*. The reason it has won praise the world over, including in China, is that it not only

① Quoted in Publisher’s Foreword, Pearl S. Buck, *The Chinese Novel: Nobel Lecture Delivered before the Swedish Academy at Stockholm*, New York: The John Day Company, 1939.

② As a matter of fact, Pearl Buck is a controversial figure in China. Chinese criticism of her could be divided into three categories: positive, negative, and mixed. For more details, see Liu Haiping’s article “Pearl S. Buck Reception in China Reconsidered”, and *Pearl S. Buck: Chinese Criticisms*, edited by Guo Yingjian.

draws the appearance of the Chinese, but also shows part of their soul. (qtd. in Liu Haiping, "Pearl S. Buck's Reception in China Reconsidered" 60)

Obviously Pearl Buck did contribute a great deal to the mutual understanding between China and the United States. She could not, however, singlehandedly bridge the chasm between the two countries. Her other sisters also carved their names on that "human bridge" over the Pacific Ocean.

As a matter of fact, before the 1930s, the American image of China underwent a long process of change. It was "like China's great rivers, flooding and receding and shifting their courses to the sea" (Isaacs 63). Scholars like Raymond Dawson argued that instead of the dragon, the appropriate symbol of China should be the color-changing chameleon.^①

^① See Raymond Dawson, *The Chinese Chameleon: An Analysis of European Conceptions of Chinese Civilization*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967. In fact, there was as much change on the part of the Chinese as on the part of the perceiver.

1.1 His Story of China



Elijah Coleman Bridgman
(April 22, 1801—
November 2, 1861)



Samuel Wells Williams
(September 1812—
February 16, 1884)



Arthur Henderson
Smith (July 18, 1845—
August 31, 1932)

Americans got their first impressions of China from their European cousins. They were impressed by the elegant silks and the sublime porcelains they obtained from the trade with Europe. They were amazed by the account of Marco Polo as well as of the 17th-century and 18th-century European missionaries and scholars. The colonial American intellectuals admired China as an enlightened model:

In the salutary of the first volume of the American philosophical Society the hope had been expressed that America would in the fullness of time come to possess much likeness to China in wealth, industry, and resources, for could we be so fortunate as to introduce the industry of the Chinese, their arts of living, and improvements in husbandry... America might become in time as populous as China. (Latourette, 124)

However, after the commencement of direct contact between China and the United States on February 22, 1784, this idealized image gradually gave way to an unfavorable one. The clipper ship, the "Empress of China", brought to the old Eastern Empire ruled by the declining Qing government a group of American merchants who brought back their stories of China to American readers. From then on, reams of books, articles, cartoons, and films on China and the Chinese people appeared in the United States. Sailors, ship captains, merchants, missionaries, politicians, reporters and travelers all contributed to the creation of the images of China. The reports and letters of merchants and sailors were the earliest records. The sailors portrayed China mainly from a geographical point of view and the traders from economic considerations. Samuel Shaw was the supercargo on "Empress of China" and later became the first American consul in Canton. His journal, written during this first voyage to the Chinese port city, contained the embryo of derogatory American attitudes toward China. He admitted that in China there had long existed a striking evidence of the wisdom of its government, the empire of China "still continued the admiration of the world"(72), and that "the merchants of the cohong were as respectable a set of men as were commonly found in other parts of the world" (74 — 75). Nevertheless, Shaw also stated that the small dealers were rogues, the government was the most oppressive one among the civilized nations upon earth and the religion accounted Chinese people's idolatry and superstition.

Following the merchants and diplomats, American missionaries reached China to convert the "perishing heathen Chinese" to Christianity. Before 1840, their travel in China was highly restricted, and they idealized the parts they saw. The series of wars fol-

lowing the Opium War, however, exposed the weakness of China and shattered the missionaries' illusion of an ideal country. More Chinese regions were opened up to the missionaries' proselytizing, and they had opportunities to observe China more closely. In the following decades, missionaries kept diaries, journals, wrote letters and reports, published magazines, newspapers and books and became hugely influential in the construction of images of China for the American public.

For these "sin-searching" missionaries, the "degenerate heathen people" were in great need of redemption, and the only way to their redemption lay through Christian civilization. Therefore, with a condescending attitude, missionaries portrayed the Chinese as an inferior people. *The Chinese Repository* and *The Missionary Herald* were the two most popular missionary magazines during the first half of the 19th century. The missionary editors in their desire "to create a climate of interest in China as a mission field" chose "colorful, emotion-provoking material that often pictured the Chinese at their worst" (Rubinstein 73). Unlike the sailors and traders, these missionaries were more concerned about Chinese people's souls. To Elijah C. Bridgeman, a prominent American missionary in China:

Their innermost soul, their very conscience, seems to be seared, dead—so insensible that they are, as regards a future life, like the beasts that perish. No painting, no imagination, can portray and lay before the Christian world the awful sins, the horrible abominations, that fill the land. (Lian 8)

Samuel Wells Williams, who went to China in 1833 and later

became secretary at the United States legation in Peking, stated: “it is much easier loving the souls of the heathen in the abstract than in the concrete, encompassed as they are in such dirty bodies, speaking forth their foul language and vile natures exhibiting every evidence of depravity” (Grayson 6). The Chinese were not only regarded as morally degraded but also biologically inferior. Arthur H. Smith, the author of *Chinese Characteristics* (1894), declared that Chinese people lacked nerves, which was quoted repeatedly by many of his followers. With their contribution, the American literary image of China was drastically changed into one of the Chinese people as contemptible and a lower form of human beings than the whites.

This negative literary image was reinforced by writers inside the United States. The “Gold Rush” of 1848 brought many Chinese to California. In 1849, there were 325 Chinese in the state. In 1868, believing that large numbers of cheap Chinese laborers would be helpful to the construction of the transcontinental railroads and to the development of the sparsely settled American West, the United States Minister to China, Anson Burlingame^①, and Secretary of State William Seward reached agreement on a new treaty granting Chinese people the right of unrestricted immigration to the United States. Consequently, the number of Chinese people on the

① Anson Burlingame (1820—1870), American diplomat, served as U. S. Minister to China and later served as a Chinese envoy to the United States. Burlingame had long urged China to send diplomatic representatives to the Western powers, and when he resigned as minister in November 1867, the imperial government named him and two Chinese colleagues to head an official delegation to visit the United States and the European capitals. See “BookRags Biography on Anson Burlingame,” 16 July 2006, <http://www.bookrags.com/biography/anson-burlingame/index.html>.